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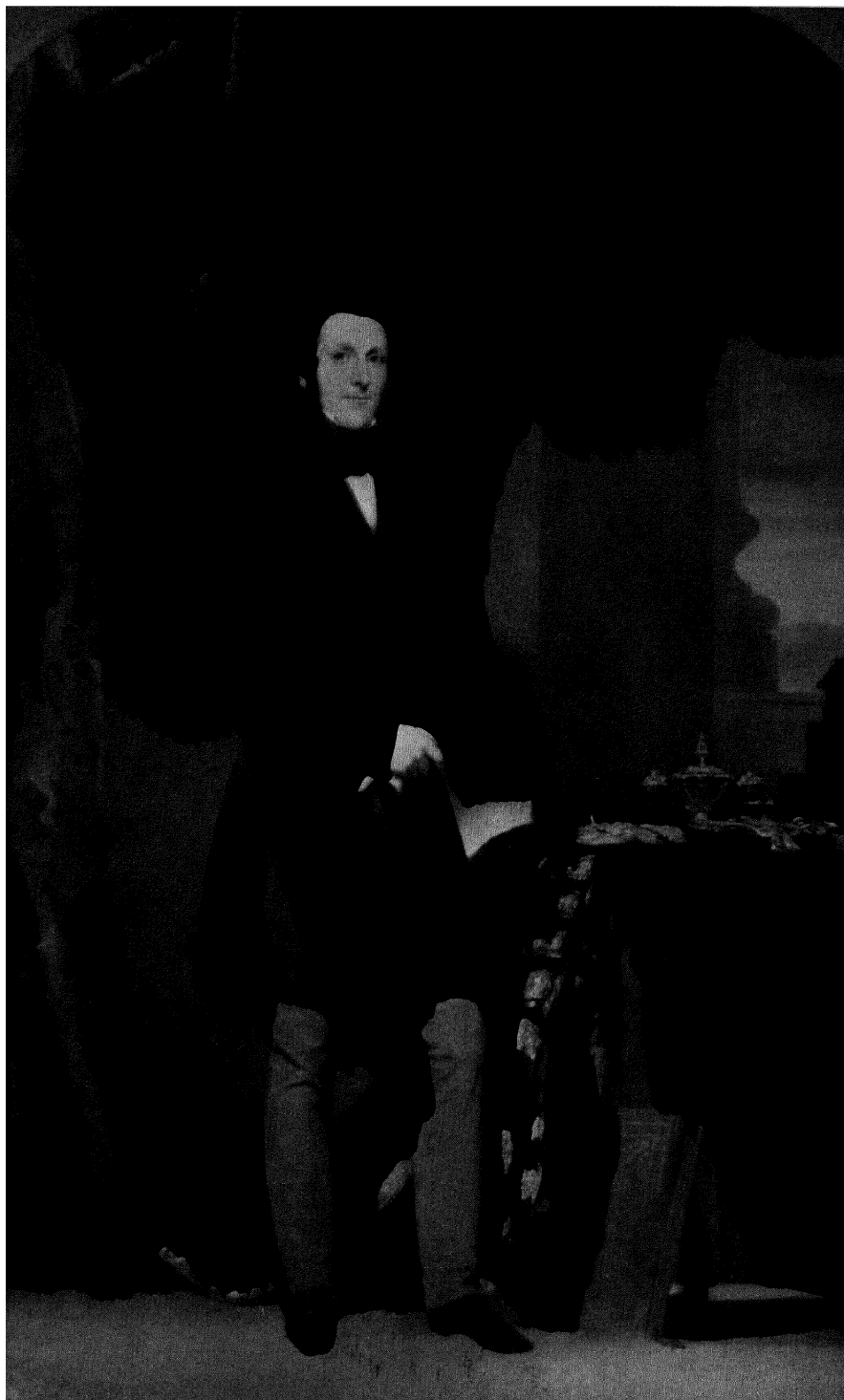
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THE
DALHOUSIE-PHAYRE
CORRESPONDENCE

1852-1856 *Pub*



LORD DALHOUSIE

National Portrait Gallery

THE
DALHOUSIE-PHAYRE
CORRESPONDENCE

1852 — 1856

Edited
with Introduction and Notes by
D. G. E. HALL

Indian Educational Service
Professor of History in the University of Rangoon

(Thesis approved for the
degree of Doctor of Literature in the
University of London)

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PREFACE

MY grateful thanks are due to the University of Rangoon for generous financial aid towards the publication of this work, to the late Earl of Dalhousie for permission to publish the letters of Sir Arthur Phayre and Thomas Spears in the Dalhousie Collection, and to the India Office authorities for valuable assistance in the transcription of these documents and for the facilities I enjoyed in the use of the Library and Record Department when engaged upon the task of editing. I am also much indebted to Sir William Foster and Professor H. H. Dodwell for reading the manuscript and for unstinted help in ways too numerous to mention; to Mr. R. C. Bradby of the Oxford University Press, who has greatly lightened the burden of proof reading for me; to the late William Spears, Esq., of Kemmendine, Rangoon, last surviving child of Thomas Spears, who placed at my disposal such family documents—alas, too few!—as he could collect; to the late M. Tau Sein Ko, Superintendent of Archaeological Survey, Burma, and J. S. Furnivall, Esq., I.C.S. (Ret.), late Commissioner of Land Records, Burma, for answers to queries on various points, to G. H. Luce, Esq., I.E.S., Reader in Burmese and Far Eastern History in the University of Rangoon, for help in the identification of Burmese place-names; to Miss L. M. Anstey for unremitting care in the transcription of the documents from the Dalhousie Collection, and to many other colleagues and friends whose voluntary and courteous co-operation I gratefully acknowledge.

The map of Burma included in this volume is a reproduction of the excellent one produced by the Mission to Ava in 1855 and subsequently published in Yule's *Narrative of the Mission . . . to the Court of Ava in 1855* (London, 1858). Not only is it a fitting companion to the text of this volume, but it is also an historical document of no small importance.

As the original punctuation of the letters is not in accord with modern standards, and in the case of Phayre's letters is extremely bad, judged by any standard, the punctuation in this volume is mine, save in quotations from original material in the notes.

As this work, when submitted together with my other published work for the Doctorate of Literature at London University, was as yet unpublished, it bears on its title-page, in accordance with the regulations of London University, the statement that it was a thesis approved for the degree in question.

D. G. E. HALL

University of Rangoon.

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ABBREVIATIONS USED IN THE NOTES

I.S.P., Cons., India Secret and Political Proceedings,
Consultation.

I.B.D., India and Bengal Dispatches.

D.N.B., Dictionary of National Biography.

INTRODUCTION

1. *The Material*

IN 1925 the University of Rangoon purchased from Messrs. Heffer of Cambridge eighty autograph letters written by Lord Dalhousie, when Governor-General of India, to Captain Arthur Phayre, first British Commissioner of Pegu and Governor-General's Agent in the negotiations with the Court of Ava at the end of the Second Burmese War (1852). The letters form a complete series covering the period from December 1852, when Phayre, then Commissioner of the province of Arakan, entered upon his new duties in Pegu, until the Governor-General's departure for England in March 1856. Along with them was purchased also Phayre's two-volume private journal, extending in haphazard fashion with frequent gaps from 1852 to 1859. The letters and journal had previously been in the possession of the late Sir George W. Forrest, who published two articles containing extracts from the former in the *Athenaeum*, 28 November 1895 and 15 February 1896. In the former of these he mentioned having bought the collection from a second-hand bookseller on the Quay at Dublin, who in turn had acquired it at an auction some years earlier—probably an auction of Phayre's effects, since he died, a bachelor, in lodgings at Bray, near Dublin, in December 1885.

In deliberating how best to render this interesting and valuable historical material available for students in particular, and the public in general, the writer came to the conclusion that Phayre's replies and, if possible, their enclosures from the British news-writers at Amarapoora, so enthusiastically commented upon by Dalhousie from time to time, should be sought out, so that the whole correspondence might be published. These were discovered to be in the famous collection of the Governor-General's private papers, arranged and indexed by himself before his death at Dalhousie Castle. The permission of the late Earl of Dalhousie for the transcription and publication of these was sought by the University a short while before his death, and was readily granted. At the suggestion of Sir

William Foster the letters were sent to the India Office, where, by the courtesy of the Superintendent of Records, Mr. W. T. Ottewill, they were kept in safe custody while the work of transcription was carried out by Miss Anstey. The whole collection, now published, consists of some 262 letters, of which, in addition to the eighty contributed by Lord Dalhousie, ninety-seven were written by Phayre, and no less than seventy-nine were letters received by him with great regularity from one Thomas Spears, British correspondent at the court of King Mindon of Burma, whose 'intelligence' was of sufficient importance for copies of all his letters to be forwarded on the earliest possible occasion to Lord Dalhousie personally.

Although Lord Dalhousie marked almost all his letters in this collection 'private', and one at least 'confidential', the correspondence between him and Phayre was really a demi-official one. It was the means whereby the Governor-General kept in closer touch with a subordinate than was possible through normal official channels. Lord Dalhousie, like the late Lord Curzon, made a great point of the use of this direct form of communication by all his more important subordinates. His biographer tells us that in the Dalhousie Collection 'a mass of correspondence with Henry and John Lawrence, with the three Commanders-in-Chief, namely, Lord Gough, Sir Charles Napier, and Sir William Gomm, with Sir Frederick Currie, General Godwin, Major Mackeson, and Major Phayre fills twenty-one volumes'.¹ In Phayre's case such a method was rendered all the more necessary by the difficult and protracted negotiations for a peace treaty with the Burmese government, which continued until almost the end of Dalhousie's term of office in India, and in the course of which a number of extremely delicate situations arose, demanding among other things a degree of understanding and unanimity between the Governor-General and his Agent that only a 'private' correspondence could ensure. 'I hope to hear from you regularly and confidentially', he writes at the end of his first letter to Phayre after the latter's departure for Rangoon.² 'You will find such correspondence a material aid to you; and

¹ Lee Warner, *Life of the Marquis of Dalhousie* (London, 1904), vol. i, *Intro.*, p. ix.

² No. 2.

I beg you to state your views and wishes to me at all times unreservedly.' Phayre took his cue. 'I trust this letter will not have been too tedious,' he says at the end of his first reply; 'but I shall continue to write of everything I consider worthy of your Lordship's notice.'¹

Both Lord Dalhousie's and Phayre's letters are in almost every case supplementary to, and explanatory of, the official correspondence passing between the Governor-General in Council and the Commissioner of Pegu and Governor-General's Agent in Burma. It was Dalhousie's custom, after writing a minute for transmission through official channels to Phayre, to write a 'private' letter in explanation of it. Phayre, too, adopted the same course. Both in so doing allowed themselves considerably to relax their official stiffness, and to express their opinions with a freedom impossible in official correspondence. And although Phayre, with that almost excessive courtesy for which he was noted, never abandons his attitude of respectful deference towards his chief, the latter occasionally shows his more human side in sallies of playful wit or of apt comment delightful to the reader. On such occasions he could unbend with the ease of the born patrician, without any compromise with dignity. And unlike Lord Curzon—between whom and Lord Dalhousie there is in so many ways a close resemblance—he made no enemies by the exercise of his wit; for in it was no touch of 'the spirit of the incorrigible boy', nor trace of bitterness.

Valuable as these letters are as documents of British-Burmese history, throwing much-needed light upon the period immediately succeeding the Second Burmese War, their chief interest to the majority of readers will lie in the unobstructed view they afford of the great pro-consul in his relations with one of his most trusted subordinates, and of the way in which his later Burmese policy was, as it were, hammered out upon the anvil, and fashioned to fit the conditions of the time, and the possibilities of the future, as he understood them. So in arranging such a correspondence the first object of its editor would seem to be to place the reader in a position from which, while grasping with as little difficulty as possible the development of events, the

¹ *Infra*, p. 10.

clearest view of Lord Dalhousie and his policy in relation to those events may be obtained. Such an object could not be achieved by placing all Dalhousie's letters together in one part of the volume, all Phayre's in another part, and so on. Lord Dalhousie himself arranged Phayre's letters with their enclosures in the order in which he received them. His own to Phayre fit easily into their places in the series. It has therefore seemed best to regard the whole correspondence from Lord Dalhousie's viewpoint, to see the letters in the order in which he saw them, and arrange them accordingly. Thus we must imagine ourselves looking over his shoulder as he writes to Phayre, receives the latter's reply (often with enclosures), and proceeds in his next letter to deal with matters reported by Phayre and others that have cropped up in the meantime. We see the letters in the order in which they either left Dalhousie's private room for Burma or entered it from Burma, as the case may be. And we view events not strictly in the order of their occurrence, but in the order in which they presented themselves to the directing mind behind everything, receiving reports and issuing orders, gleaning intelligence and acting upon it.

2. The Second Burmese War

The Second Burmese War of 1852 resulted in the annexation to British India of the old Talaing kingdom of Pegu, which for most of the period since its conquest by Tabinshwehti (1531-50) had been under Burmese domination. Great Britain already held nearly all the coastline of the old Burmese Empire, namely, the province of Arakan—once like Pegu an independent kingdom—and the Tenasserim Provinces, which the Alaungpaya dynasty had won back from Siam in its early heyday of expansion. These two regions had been ceded to Great Britain at the end of the First Burmese War (1824-6) by the Treaty of Yandabo, dictated to the Court of Ava by Sir Archibald Campbell from within three marches of the capital city. They represented guarantees against any further movement of Burmese aggression such as had threatened British India in the later stages of the great struggle with the Marathas. The first war had been a matter of frontier defence so far as the British were concerned. The Burmese, after a brief period of eclipse re-

sulting from the revival of the old Talaing power in 1740, had found a new national leader in the victorious Alaungpaya of Shwebo, who assumed the crown in 1752, reconquered the Talaings, and founded the new port of Rangoon, destined to rise so amazingly in the latter half of the nineteenth century. He and his immediate successors were not content with re-establishing the ancient kingdom of Burma. A wave of expansive energy seems to have swept over the whole Burman race, and the kings of the period 1752–1824 either took the lead or were swept onwards in the surge. Terrible raids—we cannot call them conquests—laid Siam low, destroying its ancient capital of Ayuthia. Quarrels with China led up to a series of invasions magnificently repulsed by the Burmese. Arakan, conquered in 1784, was absorbed into the Burmese Empire, and became a danger zone from which Chittagong and Eastern Bengal were threatened. Assam, Kachar, and Manipur came within the scope of Burmese aggression, one particularly obnoxious form of which was that of wholesale deportations for repopulating Burmese territory. The self-confidence of the court and people knew no bounds, and their arrogant treatment of British protests arising out of frontier incidents was only equalled by their ludicrous ignorance of British power. But when the inevitable war broke out in 1824 the British task was no easy one. The greater part of three campaigns had to be fought before the Court of Ava would submit. Yet, although the Burmese fought with a dash and bravery never since equalled by them, the enormous casualties suffered by the British armies resulted rather from ignorance of campaigning conditions and (from the point of view of the present day) appalling mismanagement.

When the Treaty of Yandabo was made in 1826 it was hoped that the victorious advance of the British army to within easy reach of Ava, the levying of a large indemnity, and the seizure of two vitally important coastal regions had freed the British frontier from all danger of further Burmese aggression. This object may fairly be said to have been achieved. Until the rise of the French power in Indo-China in the latter half of last century, the condition of the Eastern frontier caused no Governor-General a single sleepless night. But the attitude of the Burmese Government towards the British Residents at the

capital, appointed under the Treaty of Yandabo, and towards the merchants, who were attracted thither by the great natural wealth of the country, remained intolerable beyond anything experienced anywhere else. Crawford,¹ the first British Envoy at Ava after the war, sent to conclude the commercial treaty provided for in the Yandabo Treaty, was in the words of Yule,² 'rendered weary, hopeless and disgusted, by the arrogance and impracticability of the Burmese ministers', who had no sooner agreed to an almost worthless treaty than they attempted to infringe it. His successor, Major Burney, who resided at Ava from 1830 to 1837, although he obtained a degree of personal influence with the ministers of the now practically insane Bagyidaw, found his position an impossible one. He ultimately withdrew on a plea of ill-health, thus giving up his attempt to solve the hopeless dilemma as between a submission to insult damaging to the British name in the East and an assertion of his dignity and rights, that could only lead to a serious situation in Anglo-Burmese relations. After Burney's exit two further British Envoys—Colonel Benson, the Resident, and his assistant, Captain Macleod—tried successively against the most absurd treatment to maintain diplomatic intercourse between Ava and Calcutta. When in 1840, to the vast amusement of the new King, Tharawaddy, the latter withdrew the Residency from Burma, official relations between Great Britain and Burma were broken off, not to be renewed until Commodore Lambert was sent to Rangoon eleven years later to demand reparation for injuries inflicted upon British subjects there.

In the meantime the increasing madness of King Tharawaddy led to his deposition in 1845 by his eldest legitimate son, the Prince of Pagan, who commenced his reign by executing as

¹ This was John Crawford (1783–1868), the famous orientalist, who had already had a distinguished career in Java, Siam, and the Malay States, publishing his admirable three-volume *History of the Indian Archipelago* in 1820. Having succeeded Sir Stamford Raffles to the Governorship of Singapore in 1823, he was removed thence in 1826 to assume his ungrateful task at the court of King Bagyidaw of Burma. In 1829 he published his *Journal of an Embassy from the Governor-General of India to the Court of Ava*, in which he gave a fascinating account of his experiences there, 'probably of much greater worth than the treaty', says Yule. (*Vide D.N.B.*, article by Prof. R. K. Douglas.)

² Yule, *Mission to Ava* (London, 1858), p. 222.

many of his relatives as he could lay hands upon. Attaching to himself as ministers or favourites such notorious ruffians as the Kyauk Padaung Mingyi, once a dacoit leader, and the two Muslim Myowuns of Amarapoora, Maung Bhai Sahib¹ and Maung Bhein, he used every known terror to extort wealth from his people. In the first two years of his reign nearly 6,000 people were either publicly executed or privately put away while the King spent his time in cock-fighting, gambling, and debauchery. Under him the events occurred which precipitated the Second Burmese War. This time, however, notwithstanding the fact that in his *Final Minute*² Lord Dalhousie stated that on more than one occasion the Burmese had actually threatened war against the British,³ and were still regarded as formidable in the East, the war was not essentially a matter of frontier defence like the first.

Since the Yandabo Treaty the Burmese had been at the worst no more than a potential source of danger to the Eastern frontier of British India; their military power, in fact, had sunk to a contemptible level, and the central control over the civil administration of the country had almost completely broken down. Local Governors like Gaung Gyi of Tharawaddy, later the great dacoit leader, did practically what they liked. In 1851 the Burmese Governor of Rangoon, aware of Pagan Min's hatred of Westerners, deemed it an excellent opportunity to subject certain British traders to outrage in order to extort money from them. No more inopportune moment could have been chosen. Two years had elapsed since Lord Dalhousie had brought the Sikh War to a successful conclusion, and his hands were reasonably free to deal with this old running sore, now beginning to give fresh trouble. The matter at issue was a comparatively trifling one, but the course of Anglo-Burmese relations from 1826 onwards rendered it one that could not be overlooked. On

¹ Ultimately sacrificed to save his master when the people of Amarapoora goaded to desperation rose in revolt. He was executed after three days of the most revolting tortures.

² Printed in Baird, *Private Letters of the Marquess of Dalhousie*, pp. 187-8.

³ It was true. On one occasion King Tharawaddy had actually collected a force of 50,000 men at Rangoon ostensibly for an attack upon British territory. But such threats caused little alarm on account of the transparent weakness of the Burmese power, which had decayed rapidly since the halcyon days of Bandula.

the other hand, a demand for reparation would almost certainly be rejected by the Burmese, and this, under the circumstances, could lead only to war. The situation was a delicate one. The policy of tamely submitting—in the interests of peace—to the insults of the Court of Ava, and the outrages of its officials, was one fraught with danger, for, as Lord Dalhousie put it, ‘the Government of India could never, consistently with its own safety, permit itself to stand for a single day in an attitude of inferiority towards a native power, and least of all towards the Court of Ava’.¹ He therefore decided to demand reparation, and to do so in such a way as would make the Burmese think twice before they refused. The mission was entrusted to Commodore Lambert of H.M.S. *Fox*, who steamed off to Rangoon, accompanied by the Company’s steamers *Tenasserim* and *Proserpine*. At Rangoon the British mission was treated with studied insolence by the Burmese officials, but when Lambert dispatched a letter directly to the King a new Governor was appointed to Rangoon and full redress promised. How this unexpectedly favourable situation speedily degenerated into one of war is laconically related by Dalhousie in a letter dated the 23rd of January 1852 to his lifelong friend Sir George Couper:²

‘The Commodore and the new Governor have not hit it off. The Burmese continued their insolence and hostile tone, and finally the Commodore left Rangoon and established the blockade. This would have been all right; but before he went he thought proper, in disobedience of his orders, to make reprisals. He seized a ship belonging to the King which lay in the river. The Burmese manned the stockades and fired upon him. He anchored; sent the *Fox*’s broadside into the stockade, where were 3000 men, who disappeared to a man, and then destroyed their war boats and spiked and sank their guns. So all that fat is in the fire.’

The action of the ‘combustible’ commodore, as Dalhousie called him, was undoubtedly high-handed. But in an era when Palmerston could rally the country round him in defence of a far more high-handed act by his ‘Civis Romanus’ speech, it would have required a man of superhuman self-control to have swallowed

¹ Dalhousie’s Final Minute in Baird, *op. cit.*, p. 188.

² Baird, *op. cit.*, pp. 188–9.

the insults deliberately heaped upon the British mission by the new Governor of Rangoon, who had come seemingly armed with full powers to deal with the British demands. When an official deputation under Commander Fishbourne, carrying a letter in which the British demands for compensation to the extent of Rs. 9,948 and for the establishment of a British agent at Rangoon were set forth, was sent to wait upon the new Governor, it was refused admittance in a manner calculated to inflict as decisive a snub as possible, and the act was justified on the grounds that the officers of the deputation in a drunken condition attempted to disturb the slumbers of the servant of 'the all-powerful Lord of the Universe'. 'We can't afford to be shown to the door anywhere in the East', remarked the Governor-General, and preliminary preparations for war were begun. On 18 February 1852 a letter was dispatched to the King of Burma, in which the tone of dignified remonstrance used in previous communications was changed to one of menace. Compensation to the extent of ten lakhs of rupees was now demanded to cover the expense already incurred by the Government of India in military and naval preparations. The ultimatum was to expire on 1 April. Even after this decisive step Dalhousie seems to have hoped that the definite threat of war might bring the Burmese Government to a more reasonable attitude. Right up to the last moment he held open the door to peace. The King, he believed, was genuinely uneasy about the prospect of war with the British, but was likely to be hurried into it by his people. So even when early in April the British expeditionary force appeared before Rangoon, a steamer was sent ahead with a flag of truce to ask if a reply from the King to his ultimatum had been received.

There was, however, at the Burmese Court a strong war party among the younger officials, who thought that the cannon recently manufactured by European adventurers in the King's service, and the rudiments of drill introduced by them into the army, rendered the Burmese an altogether more formidable foe than they had been in 1824. This party gained the upper hand as against the more peaceable members of the Court, led by the King's half-brother, the Prince of Mindon. The new Governor of Rangoon, whose treatment of Commodore Lambert's over-

tures caused such a dramatic turn in the negotiations, was apparently a member of the war party, and came to Rangoon fully determined to provoke war.¹

Although a detailed discussion of the causes of the war would be out of place here, the question of Lord Dalhousie's responsibility for it, much argued at the time, is worth some consideration.

The case for him is clearly set forth by his biographer, Sir William Lee Warner;² that against him was forcibly argued by Richard Cobden in his contemporary pamphlet entitled, 'How wars are got up in India: the Origin of the Burmese War'. Cobden gave a detailed narrative of the negotiations leading up to the war, based upon the information contained in the Parliamentary Papers,³ from which, he contended with reason, important documents were withheld. He strongly censured Dalhousie for sending a squadron under a Commodore of the Royal Navy to open the negotiations, when, 'owing to the anomalous relations which exist between the Royal Navy and the Government of India, he had no power to compel Commodore Lambert to obey his orders'. The Envoy selected should have been a civilian, or at least a Company's officer familiar with the customs of the country. He criticized Dalhousie's raising of his demands for compensation from less than Rs. 10,000 at the outset to ten lakhs of rupees, and ultimately to the cession of Pegu, and questioned the whole wisdom of conquest in Indo-China on moral, racial, and financial grounds. It is an interesting pamphlet mainly because of the light which it throws upon the ideas and outlook of a notable leader of the peace movement in mid-nineteenth-century Europe, but it displays comparatively little understanding of the realities of the British situation in the East at that time. Possibly Dalhousie erred in being over-anxious to maintain British prestige, if necessary by force of arms. Possibly also insufficient examination was made of the claims for compensation against the Burmese authorities so readily put forward by British merchants. But Dalhousie's own vindication of his

¹ Fytche, *Burma, Past and Present*, i. 120-4.

² *Op. cit.*, i, chap. xii. Dalhousie never publicly defended his policy: he left it to the judgement of posterity.

³ There are two sets, presented to Parliament on 4 June 1852 and 15 March 1853 respectively.

policy in a private letter¹ written soon after the commencement of operations raises fundamental issues beyond the scope of Cobden's treatise:

'Your brief remark on the Burmese business is a very just one, and comprehends the whole case. Shepherd and others after him say you are dealing with a barbarian: be magnanimous, disregard his insults. You truly say, what will the barbarian think of your disregard of his insults: Why, simply that it is fear of his power, and submission to it. Besides, this is not a question of insult merely, but of injury. This present case is merely the last straw that has broken the camel's back. Our treaty has been violated, our subjects plundered, our traders imprisoned, threatened, beaten, and when redress was sought then came the insult, and not insult only, but refusal of all redress. The simple question is whether, before all Asia, England will submit to Ava, desert its subjects, and be driven out of the Irrawaddy; or whether, protecting its subjects, it will enforce its treaty rights by arms, and if no less alternative will do, take possession of the Irrawaddy itself. God knows I lament the alternative, but I did not create it. I have laboured to avert it, and as it has been forced upon us, I say that if we shrink from it our power in India will be shaken by our short-sighted and cowardly policy worse than ever it has been shaken by our enemies.'

The Government of India, in short, had come to the end of its patience with the Court of Ava. And we must not forget that in Dalhousie's day the British outlook on questions of this sort was vastly different from what it is to-day. Cobden's criticisms have a twentieth-century ring about them that proclaims him in this respect to have been in advance of his own age; but he obviously did not understand the real situation as between Great Britain and Burma, either in its wider aspect or from the purely diplomatic standpoint.

Lord Dalhousie regarded the war as inevitable. The actual occasion of it he considered comparatively unimportant, however deplorable, as the following extract from a letter, written after the passions of war had died down, shows:

'There is no doubt that Lambert was the *immediate* cause of the war by seizing the King's ship, in direct disobedience of his orders from me. I accepted the responsibility of his act, but disapproved and censured it. He replied officially that he had written home, and

¹ Baird, *op. cit.*, p. 198.

he was sure Palmerston would have approved. However, I gently told him that while acting for this Government he must obey its orders, and we have never ceased to be good friends. Those dispatches are suppressed in the Blue-Book.

‘But, while I say this, I do not at all mean that but for his act the war would not have been. On the contrary, I believe everything would have been just as it has been. Lambert’s service during the war has been admirable.

‘It is easy to be wise after the fact. If I had had the gift of prophecy I would not have employed Lambert to negotiate.’¹

The war which followed has many points of interest. In the first place, the difficulties of organization, transport, and co-operation, which were successfully surmounted by Lord Dalhousie, are instructive. There were two military and naval services, those of the Crown and those of the Company respectively, between whom friction had to be prevented, especially in the matter of the higher appointments. Further, the expeditionary force was composed of detachments from the then separate armies of the Bengal and Madras Presidencies, and extraordinary care had to be taken in apportioning to each the departments it was to furnish and the special appointments its officers might fill. The co-operation of army and navy was essential to the success of the campaign. But General Godwin, who was selected by the Commander-in-Chief, Sir William Gomm, to command the expedition, was notorious for his jealousy of the Navy, and although without naval co-operation he could not move an inch, he was tactless enough to write officially to the Government of India that he would rather have charge of an army of 50,000 men in the field than of one of 5,000 dependent on naval co-operation.² He could never reconcile himself to the position of the Navy as the senior service, and after the death of Rear-Admiral Austen,³ the Commander-in-Chief of the Naval forces, of cholera at Prome late in the year 1852, he bitterly resented the fact that Commodore Lambert, who temporarily officiated in the dead admiral’s place during a most important stage of the operations until the arrival of a new naval commander-in-chief from England, took precedence of

¹ Baird, *op. cit.*, pp. 260-1.

² *Ibid.*, p. 227.

³ He was a brother of Jane Austen, the novelist.

him by virtue of his rank as officiating Commander-in-Chief of Her Majesty's Naval Forces in the Eastern Seas.

Then, too, both Godwin and Austen were septuagenarians, and the former was, as Dalhousie put it, '*laudator temporis acti* in the extreme'.¹ He had fought in the First Burmese War and believed that 'nothing that was not done then can be done now—everything that was done then must be done over again now'.² At the outset he disagreed with Lord Dalhousie's views as to the whole plan of campaign, and had to be personally talked over by the Governor-General. His fabian tactics at certain stages of the campaign were alike utterly inexplicable and vastly embarrassing to the Government of India, and were the subject of attacks in the English press, notably *The Times* and *Punch*. The latter published a caricature representing the General standing buckling on his sword and saying to a sailor who was knocking down a Burman, 'Oh dear! this is quite irregular, very irregular'.

Other major difficulties were those of climate and transport. Here Lord Dalhousie's personal exertions, stimulated by the experience of the costly blunders of the first war, did much to ensure that the second should not be a repetition of the first in that respect. Calcutta and Madras were placed within easy communication with the forces operating in Burma by a fleet of steamers. Materials were prepared ahead for the speedy construction of barracks at Rangoon and Prome. Adequate supplies of fresh food were stored at Amherst. Every effort was made to provide the force with the best medical equipment possible in those days. Hospitals were constructed at Amherst, and were kept in close touch with the expeditionary force by a regular service of river steamers. In order to facilitate any land operations the force might be called upon to perform, orders were issued for 300 elephants for the transport of artillery to be procured and despatched through Arakan across the mountain passes into Pegu.

Finally one difficulty, which unexpectedly presented itself at the beginning of the war, led to characteristic efforts on the part of Lord Dalhousie to counteract it. A regiment of local service troops, the 38th Native Infantry, or Bengal Volunteers, as they

¹ Dalhousie to Couper, Baird, *op. cit.*, p. 227.

² *Ibid.*

were called, refused for caste reasons to proceed to Burma by sea. What might have proved an ugly situation, reminiscent of a similar one with tragic consequences in the First Burmese War, was saved by ordering the men to proceed to Arakan by road via Dacca. It was at once decided to set about the task of linking Calcutta and Rangoon by a road passing through Dacca, Akyab, over the Taungup Pass to Prome, and thence to Rangoon. The first part of this gigantic operation, involving the reconditioning of an old road from Dacca to Chittagong, the selection of a new line from Chittagong to Akyab, 200 miles in extent, which would enable the rivers Naaf and Myoo to be conveniently bridged, and the construction of a raised roadway along it, was put in hand with all possible speed, and was reported almost finished within six months of its commencement.

Dalhousie's initial plan of campaign was to seize the Burmese ports of Martaban, Rangoon, and Bassein before the rainy season set in, and during the enforced period of leisure imposed by the wet monsoon to await overtures from Ava. He hoped that this move might be sufficient to cause the Burmese Government to climb down and offer terms. It was not long before he was gratified by news of successes.

'Dispatches just come from Rangoon entirely satisfactory. Martaban captured on 5th, Rangoon after three days assaulted, and carried on 14th, Burmese gone; 100 pieces of artillery captured. The ships and troops worked beautifully together. All behaved perfectly, Europeans and natives, and the best possible spirit prevails. 3 officers killed, 14 wounded; 15 men killed, 120 wounded. Several officers died of the *sun* upon the field. That is our worst foe here. This is a great success, and though all loss is lamentable, I think the victory has not been dearly purchased'.¹

Shortly afterwards Bassein fell an easy prey to a small force under Colonel Errington. Thus the initial objectives had been gained within less than a month of the opening of the campaign. With the advent of May the first indications of the wet monsoon were expected. The new acquisitions therefore were put in thoroughly defensible condition and prompt measures taken for the comfort and health of the troops.

But the anticipated overtures of peace from Amarapoora were

¹ Letter of 24 April 1852 to Couper. Baird, *op. cit.*, p. 198.

not made. No sign came from the Golden Feet. The Lord of Many White Elephants viewed the early successes of the foreigners with comparative unconcern. Soon, he believed, with the development of the wet monsoon's greatest intensity, his generals cholera and fever would put a different complexion upon affairs. Then, when his enemies were decimated by disease, his invincible armies would drive them into the sea. Herein he was grossly mistaken. As the weary months of rain dragged on, Lord Dalhousie's precautionary measures proved their worth, and the mortality among the troops and sailors of the expeditionary force was actually kept lower than the average in India.

Still no sign came from Amarapoorā. The King, it was reported, was 'cock-fighting, as usual'. 'This beats Nero's fiddling while Rome burnt', wrote Lord Dalhousie in disgust.¹ The situation in fact gravely perplexed him. 'We can hear of no troops, no fortifications anywhere', he wrote.² 'But the beasts don't give in; and this sort of passive resistance is perhaps as embarrassing for my part of the business as anything could be, for *I can't get a result*. They give and take no terms. To make our own terms, take Pegu (for to take Rangoon alone is absurd) is what I desire to avoid; and yet to go away is to be practically expelled from Ava.' When the dispute had first arisen Dalhousie had placed officially upon record his opinion 'that conquest in Burma would be a calamity second only to the calamity of war'. Now, in face of this unexpected situation, after reviewing every possible line of action, the Governor-General was forced to the unwilling conclusion that the retention of the Burmese province of Pegu was 'the only adequate measure for the punishment of the Burmese, for the reimbursement of expenses, and for ensuring future peace by crippling Burman power'.³ Such a course, he confided to Sir George Couper, would be 'odious to them and undesired by us. Daily I am more mortified and disheartened by the political necessity which I see before me. It will now be submitted to the Court, and must be decided by them; for it would neither be constitutional nor respectful that I should keep silence, and act on my own responsibility, when

¹ Baird, *op. cit.*, p. 230.

² *Ibid.*, p. 203.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 217.

there is no paramount necessity for so doing'.¹ Conquest, he thought, was a calamity, but in this case the avoidance of conquest would be a worse calamity, since it could only result ultimately in the recurrence in a worse form of the evil they were now fighting to destroy. If the Court of Directors should refuse to annex Pegu, 'and check their own inevitable progress for a while, I should still say of the British Empire in the East, as Galileo of the earth, "Still it moves"'.

In anticipation of the Home Government's hearty approval of his plans—which was accorded in a dispatch from the Secret Committee dated 6 July—measures were pushed on during the rains in preparation for the subjugation of Pegu early in the ensuing cold weather. Late in July Dalhousie himself paid a visit to Rangoon, and discussed matters with Godwin and Lambert. He found the fire-eating old General anxious to push on right up to Amarapoora, and took the opportunity firmly to impress upon him that his plans did not envisage any advance beyond Prome, which in the absence of an exact definition was generally regarded as marking the northern boundary line of Pegu. Lord Dalhousie not only shrank from incurring the enormous cost that the mere transport of an army so far up the Irrawaddy would impose, having regard to the extraordinary difficulties of carriage and food supplies, but the result, he felt, would not justify such an outlay.

Public opinion in England also was at first opposed to an advance up to the capital, involving the possibility of the complete conquest of Burma.

Just when plans for the new campaign were ripe, a new difficulty descended like a bolt from the blue. The Secret Committee in its dispatch of 6 September, while approving the Government of India's proposal to annex Pegu, insisted that the Court of Ava must be forced, under the threat of complete subjugation, to make a treaty formally recognizing the annexation. And the London press, conveniently forgetting its earlier counsels of moderation, began to shriek for a dictated peace at the capital itself. When early in November the dispatch arrived Prome had fallen to the British arms, and the Burmese generalissimo, the amiable but incompetent son of the great Bandula,

¹ Baird, *op. cit.*, pp. 207–8. Letter of 27 June 1852.

had surrendered in order to escape the punishment awaiting him at Amarapoora. The piecemeal occupation of the province was in progress.

Dalhousie decided in no way to alter his plans. 'The Government at home have embarrassed me by orders, which, if obeyed, would force me to conquer Ava—a territory of 800 miles in length', he wrote to Couper.¹ 'I demur, and don't mean to obey, unless they repeat peremptory orders. Don't suppose this is insubordination. I only delay and remonstrate against an act which is calculated to be most detrimental to the public interests. It is my duty to do this as much as it is to obey.' In a very long minute dated 3 November he laid before his colleagues an exhaustive statement of his position.² In the first place he could not agree that a treaty was necessary. Among civilized states treaties were of great power and value; but not so among Eastern nations, who 'set little store by such instruments'. The history of British relations with Burma showed that a treaty would impose upon the British Government obligations of interference whenever its stipulated rights were disregarded. There would therefore be perpetual risk of quarrel. Further, a treaty was worthless. 'The only consideration which would induce such a power as Burmah to refrain from hostilities, and to save our subjects harmless, is fear of our power and of the consequences if they should provoke its exercise. If they have that fear, a treaty is superfluous for our protection: if they have it not, a treaty is worthless.' Under the circumstances, therefore, a treaty with Burma would be 'of no more value than the reed with which it is written', and as a barrier to hostility 'as flimsy as the paper on which it is traced'.

Since, however, the Secret Committee was anxious for a treaty, he would do his best to procure one. But he regarded it as in the last degree improbable that the King would sign a treaty formally ceding Pegu. The national pride of the Burmese people would struggle bitterly against such an open humiliation. An advance to Amarapoora to force the signature of a worthless document would have to be carried out against almost insuperable difficulties of transport and communications. The cost too

¹ *Ibid.*, p. 230.

² Secret Consultation of 26 November 1852, No. 1.

would be enormous. Further, after the occupation of the capital, 'if the Honourable Committee will refer to the map of Burma it will find that six degrees of latitude must still be traversed before the subjugation of the Burman power will be effected'. Let them consider the size of the military force required for holding this large area in the face of a hostile population. They could count upon the support of the Talaings of Pegu, who were an oppressed people under Burmese yoke; but the Burmans were a conquering race, long supreme over the nations round them, and would certainly not hail our supremacy. And as the King would probably escape 'to his fastnesses', the British position would be difficult indeed, 'encumbered with four hundred miles of additional territory, with enhanced expenses and disproportionate returns'.

The seizure of Pegu, he believed, afforded not only a sufficient demonstration of British power, but also reparation for the past and security for the future. Its loss would impoverish the Burmese treasury and thus shrivel up its sinews of war; Ava's man-power would be reduced by one-half, and the British would have a frontier which, on account of the impassable mountain range filling its central portion, was easily defensible against any Burmese attacks. Pegu could be held easily and cheaply. Its ports, tidal rivers, fertile soil, products, and forests held out a fair promise of commerce and wealth; and the Court of Ava 'would silently acquiesce in a loss though it would not openly assent to a cession'. He would therefore, he said, exhaust every honourable expedient before resorting to the annexation of the whole of Burma. If, on the other hand, the experience of after events should prove that only by the complete conquest of Burma peace could be procured, they would fulfil the destiny, which there, as elsewhere, would have compelled them forwards in spite of their own wishes.

Meanwhile, as soon as General Godwin announced that the occupation of Pegu was complete, a proclamation of annexation would be issued. He would then try to obtain a treaty recognizing the *fait accompli*. But he would not attach to the refusal or neglect of the offer a menace, so worded, that we should be forced to conquer Burma. Instead he would try to get a letter through to the King, explaining that they desired no further con-

quests, unless provoked thereto by his reckless hostility, which would end 'in the utter subversion of his Kingdom and the exile and ruin of his race'. In conclusion, he announced that Captain Phayre, then Commissioner of Arakan, would relinquish that post to assume the task of introducing British rule in the newly-conquered territory, for which an outline of the form of Government had been prepared, ready to come into operation upon the publication of the proclamation of annexation.

3. The first Commissioner of Pegu

Lord Dalhousie's gift for choosing the right man to carry through a difficult job was in no case more happily displayed than in his choice of Captain Arthur Purves Phayre as first Commissioner of Pegu and Governor-General's Agent in the negotiations with the Burmese Court, that arose out of the British conquest of Pegu.

In making the appointment, as in the case of the Punjab, he did not stand upon the matter of seniority, for he deliberately passed over the claims of Lieut.-Colonel Archibald Bogle, the Commissioner of the Tenasserim Provinces, Phayre's senior by a good deal in both years and service, and for long his chief at Akyab. Dalhousie's preference of Phayre before Bogle is all the more striking when it is borne in mind that the latter's long career in the East had not been an undistinguished one. During the First Burmese War he had taken part in the Assam operations. Then after an interval of military and civil work in the conquered district of Arakan he returned to Assam in 1831 as Principal Assistant to the Governor-General's Agent. There his labours in remodelling the civil administration of the district of Kamvoop, and in suppressing the systematic dacoity stimulated by the frontier officers of Bootan, brought him so prominently before the notice of the Government of India that in 1837 he was appointed Commissioner of Arakan. He held that post for nearly eleven years, and, after a short spell of service on the North-West Frontier, had been made Commissioner of the Tenasserim Provinces (1849). In this capacity he had been present at the capture of Martaban at the beginning of the Second Burmese War. Later he was wounded in action at Rangoon. The great energy with which he threw himself into

the task of housing and feeding the troops earned him the commendation of the Government of India, and he was mentioned for honour in the Governor-General's final minute announcing to the home authorities the conclusion of hostilities. Small wonder then that at the conclusion of the war he cherished the hope that he would be entrusted with the organization of the newly conquered territory and the supervision of the new frontier. The officer in charge of such duties would, he foresaw, occupy one of the most important positions in the East India Company's service; all the more so since on the one hand the new frontier would become the source of no little anxiety to the Government of India, and on the other hand Pegu with its rich natural resources would speedily surpass Tenasserim in importance. Thus the star of Moulmein would grow dim before the rising brilliance of Rangoon.¹

Dalhousie, however, selected Phayre for this position, and when Bogle indiscreetly voiced a protest against the arrangement he was informed that the Governor-General in Council could not leave to public officers the choice of their own appointments, and that on this occasion he had made 'those arrangements which appeared to him to secure the greatest aggregate amount of advantage to the public interest and to Lt.-Col. Bogle, whom it was his desire to reward'.² The reward consisted in the addition of that portion of the conquered territories which lay between the rivers Salween and Sitang, including the district of Martaban, to the Commissionership of the Tenasserim Provinces, in respect of which the Commissioner's salary was raised by Rs. 500. Pegu was thereby made a Commissionership of less value financially than Tenasserim. Later, in the war honours, Bogle was consoled with a knighthood.³

Lord Dalhousie clearly preferred the younger man for a job as arduous as the new Commissionership promised to be. Further, in the light of his experience of Godwin, the fact that Bogle had served in the First Burmese War must have been an added disqualification in the Governor-General's eyes. On the

¹ On this subject *vide* his letter to the Government of India dated 8 Dec. 1852 in *Govt. of India S.P.*, Cons. 29 Dec. 1852, No. 85.

² *I.S.P.*, Cons. 29 Dec. 1852, No. 87.

³ *India and Bengal Despatches*, vol. lxxxiv, pp. 535-7, Bengal Military, 21 Dec. (No. 17) 1853.

other hand, Phayre—if we may trust the writer of the obituary notice, culled from an unmentioned source by the uncritical Laurie—had already in 1852 achieved for himself ‘a great name along the Eastern coast’,¹ and, according to Laurie himself, who served throughout the war, ‘was looked upon as the only man fitted to be the future administrator of the conquered kingdom’.² That tantalizing writer also quotes from another unnamed source a reference to Phayre as ‘one of the chief means of turning the swamps of Arakan into the granary of the Bay, and whose forte lies in making a little kingdom a great one’.³ Undoubtedly Dalhousie’s chief reason for his choice of Phayre was that, in addition to his qualities as an administrator, he was pre-eminent among his contemporaries for knowledge of the language and people of Burma; and in this connexion it must not be forgotten that his antiquarian researches into the coins and chronicles of Arakan, for which he was already noted, were the first by any Englishman in Burma worthy of serious attention.⁴ In his minute proposing Phayre’s appointment the Governor-General wrote of him: ‘His character stands extremely high in every respect. He has had long experience of the Burmese in Aracan and at Moulmein. He speaks and writes their language perfectly and is especially qualified for the charge of a new Province.’⁵ He offered no reasons for his preference of the junior to the senior commissioner; but it is a significant fact that Bogle had boasted of his ability to carry on without any knowledge whatever of the Burmese language.

The new Commissioner was forty years old at the time of his appointment. He came of an Irish family, his paternal grandfather being Colonel Phayre of Killoughram Forest, co. Wexford. His father, Richard Phayre, after a career in the East India Company’s service, had settled at Shrewsbury, marrying Maria Ridgeway, a daughter of the well-known publisher in Piccadilly.

¹ Laurie, W. F. B., *Sketches of Distinguished Anglo-Indians* (London, 1887), 2nd edition, p. 141. The term ‘Eastern Coast’ is slipshod, Arakan and Tenasserim being on the western coast of Indo-China.

² *Ibid.*, p. 136.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 136.

⁴ Lieut. Thomas Latter in his *Grammar of the Language of Burmah* (1845), in a footnote to p. ix, speaks of Phayre as ‘a most distinguished Burmese scholar’, and mentions his contributions on the History of Arakan to the Transactions of the Asiatic Society of Bengal.

⁵ *I.S.P.*, Cons. 29 Dec. 1852, No. 1.

Mrs. Phayre was a woman of great talents, who instilled into her two sons¹ a deep devotion to duty and religion. In this respect Phayre's character bore a strong resemblance to that of Dalhousie himself, a fact which helps to explain the exceptional trust and regard which each developed for the other. Educated at Shrewsbury School, the young Phayre entered the Bengal army at the age of 16, being gazetted Ensign in the Seventh Regiment N.I. on the 13th of August 1828. Those were the days of slow promotion in the Indian Army, but Phayre's was probably the slower for the fact that his interests developed rather in an administrative than in a military direction. He became a lieutenant in 1835, the year after his transfer from India to Moulmein, the capital of the Tenasserim Provinces, where he gained his first experience of the country in which later he was to achieve such distinction. From Moulmein in 1837 he was transferred to Arakan as senior assistant to the Commissioner, then Captain Archibald Bogle, remaining there until 1846, and distinguishing himself for his work in putting down dacoity in Sandoway district (1842-3).

In 1843 he was promoted to the rank of Captain, and three years later returned to Moulmein as Principal Assistant to the Commissioner of the Tenasserim Provinces. In 1848 he left Burma to serve with his regiment in the Sikh War, returning in the following year as Commissioner of Arakan.

During these earlier years we know little of him personally: the man was hidden behind the valued and assiduous official. His great zeal and hard work are commented upon in official documents, and in July 1841 we find Bogle, as Commissioner of Arakan, making an abortive attempt to persuade the Government of Bengal to sanction an increase in Phayre's salary from Rs. 1,000 to Rs. 1,200 or Rs. 1,300 a month on account of 'excessive degree of labour' which fell to his share as senior assistant at Akyab.² Even in 1852, upon his promotion to the Commissionership of Pegu, the veil obscuring the man is only partially lifted, since both in his letters to Lord Dalhousie and in his private journal he contrives in a quite remarkable way to hide himself behind his strict and unwavering attention to busi-

¹ The other becoming later Major-General Sir Robert Phayre, K.C.B.

² *Bengal Revenue Consultations*, 1835-43, Cons. 28 Sept. 1841, No. 42.

ness. He is said to have been excessively modest and lacking in self-assertion.

Of the two accounts of his life that we possess (if we disregard mere obituary notices in periodicals) that in the *Dictionary of National Biography* is little more than a jejune catalogue of none-too-accurate dates and facts, especially for the period up to 1852. The other, Major Laurie's account, is a combination of the most puerile hero-worship and his usual scissors-and-paste method of composition. Nevertheless in the compilation of this would-be successor of Sir John Kaye there are a few more intimate touches which bring us into closer contact with the man himself.

Some of these are to be found in a letter to *The Times*¹ dated Bonn-on-the-Rhine, 21 December 1885, a few days after Phayre's death, and written by Dr. D. Brandis, late Inspector-General of Forests to the Government of India, who had served under Phayre in Burma during the period from January 1856 to December 1862. Here are some passages of personal reminiscences taken from it.²

'His firmness, his justice, his great liberality, his mastery of the language and intimate knowledge of the people, his commanding figure had made him feared and popular in the best sense of the word long before he became Commissioner of Pegu. There was a bond of sympathy between him and the people which was most remarkable. He was never married, and the Burmans could only explain the pure life which he led by regarding him as a saint, a superior being, a kind of demigod. They worshipped him, and their confidence in him was unbounded.

'It was a charming sight to see him at work in the early morning at his high standing desk in the open verandah of his house, and around him, in respectful positions on mats spread upon the floor, Burmese men, girls, and women, who had come to pay their respects, to present offerings of fruit and flowers, and to lay before him their troubles and their grievances. Now and then he would turn round to say a kind word to his visitors. With the private circumstances

¹ Given in full in Laurie, *op. cit.*, *supra*, pp. 378-82. But the work is out of print, practically unprocurable, and almost unknown. Laurie's verbose, chaotic, flatulent style, overloaded with heroics and superlatives, renders it astounding that his books were ever published. But the patient reader may often glean useful information from them.

² *Ibid.*, p. 380.

of many he was acquainted, and he listened to them all with the greatest patience. With all that he was their king and master, the people feared him as much as they loved him, and he was never molested.

‘A sentry he never would have at his door, nor did he, after the country had become quiet, take a guard or escort with him on his journeys. In March, 1861, I met him in the hills of the Pegu Yoma. He was on his way from Toungoo to Thayetmyo, and I was marching in the opposite direction. I wished to meet him in the teak forests, which cover these hills, and on the spot to discuss with him important questions. So I went ahead of my camp, and after several long and hot marches climbing over the entangled stems of the large bamboo, which had seeded and died, I reached the Commissioner’s tent late on the 3rd of March. He was alone, and we spent a most delightful evening together. All he carried was a 10 feet square. After dinner his camp-bed was brought in, and for me some horse blankets and rugs were spread upon the ground. At this place we were only 16 miles from the frontier. A few Karen villages were in these hills, and the men were all with his camp clearing the path through the forest for his elephants. That was all the protection he had, but he knew it was sufficient.’

Purged of its atmosphere of Victorian sentimentality this account displays to us a man of a sort of which the later days of John Company afford many notable examples—men such as Metcalfe, Malcolm, Munro, Mountstuart Elphinstone, and Phayre’s contemporary administrator of the Punjab, to whom Kaye likened him, John Lawrence—at once the best type of British empire-builders among backward peoples, and the explanation of British success in this field in the nineteenth century. They were men who firmly believed that British rule could be made a blessing to the peoples over whom it was extended. And they succeeded because with rare insight approaching to genius they gained a thorough understanding of the peoples with whom their work brought them into contact. Among them Phayre is entitled to a place in the foremost rank. Such indeed was the opinion of his contemporary, Sir John Kaye.¹ And as in the case of the Lawrences in the Punjab, Phayre’s name became a household word in the rich province he founded. Many years later, indeed, in 1881, long after his

¹ Quoted by Laurie, *Sketches*, p. 140.

retirement from Burma, on the occasion of his reading a paper on Burma before the Royal Society of Arts, the chairman, Sir Henry Norman, could say that 'to speak of Burma was to speak of Sir Arthur Phayre'.¹ And if his achievements were less spectacular than some of those we have mentioned above, it must be remembered that his opportunities and scope were less than theirs. Except on rare and brief occasions, of which Lord Dalhousie's tenure of power was one, Burma was but a side-show of the British Indian arena in the nineteenth century. And even when for a space the limelight was flashed upon it, the scene was too unfamiliar to create much impression.

Phayre's work was his life: so far as one can gather he had little existence apart from his work, since all his personal interests were bound up in it. In his journal he displays a keen interest in fossils and archaeology. What spare time he had was devoted to a close study of Indo-Chinese philology, ethnology, and history. His publications, and his voluminous notes preserved in the Rangoon Secretariat, proclaim him not only a man of scholarly tastes, but a researcher who employed the methods of scientific inquiry. In his dealings with the Burmese his amiable disposition, courteousness, and jovial manners with men of his own standing were incomparable assets. His firmness both as an administrator, and in his diplomatic relations with Ava, made him a man after Dalhousie's own heart. But he also possessed the necessary tact for dealing with a highly sensitive people; and among the laughter-loving people of Burma his sense of humour won for him no little personal affection. His knowledge of their life especially enabled him to make humorous points heartily appreciated by his Burmese hearers. In this connexion Yule relates the following story.² On the journey up to Amarapoora, undertaken by the British mission in August 1855, Phayre's exceptional skill in their language amazed the Burmese, who seemed to connect the power of speaking Burmese with the practice of the Buddhist religion, and often asked him if he worshipped the pagodas. On one occasion, at Yenangyaung, when Phayre in addressing an old hpoongyi (Buddhist monk) used the correct terms of respect applicable to him by Burmese custom, a grinning black-toothed onlooker said

¹ *Ibid.*, p. 142.

² Yule, *op. cit. supra*, p. 23.

somewhat impertinently: 'What! do *you* worship the hpoongyi? Then why didn't you make proper obeisance to him?' Phayre's prompt retort, 'This is not a worship day', raised a loud laugh among the bystanders.

Tall, dignified, rarely ruffled, steadily following out the course marked by his cooler judgement and common sense when alarmist reports and the anomalous situation, in which he found himself in his early dealings with Ava, would have turned the head of a weaker man, he more than justified Lord Dalhousie's confidence in him. For, in appointing Phayre, the Governor-General could not have foreseen that he would be called upon to hold Pegu and conduct British relations with Ava throughout the two critical periods of the Crimean War and the Indian Mutiny.

4. *The Negotiations for a Peace Treaty*

The correspondence collected in this volume deals with a wide range of subjects such as would naturally come within the purview of men responsible for, and actively engaged in, introducing British rule into newly conquered territory, socially, economically, and administratively disorganized to a degree experienced nowhere else by the British in their expansion in the East. But the subject to which chief attention is devoted in the letters is that of relations with the Court of Ava. Public opinion, the Press, and the Court of Directors in England all demanded a treaty. Lord Dalhousie, under no illusions whatever as to Ava's view of the matter, yet hoping against hope that the impossible might be achieved, resolved to leave no stone unturned in his endeavours to procure some sort of a treaty recognizing the British position in Burma. In the pages of the correspondence itself the trend of the negotiations can be traced with ease. Here, therefore, it will be our task to explain some of the more important features of Anglo-Burmese diplomacy during the period covered by the correspondence.¹

At the end of 1852, while Lord Dalhousie was trying to persuade the home authorities of the futility of an advance to Ava,

¹ An interesting summary is given by Sir William Lee Warner (*op. cit.* ii. 23-38), who had access to this correspondence. But the scope of his work naturally imposed severe limitations upon his use of it.

and yet at the same time on account of the Burmese Government's obstinate refusal to negotiate, was forced to make plans for it, a dramatic turn of events at Amarapoora changed the whole situation. Pagan Min's half-brother, the Mindon Prince, a son of Tharawaddy by an inferior wife, had throughout opposed the war. His pleasant character and the Burmese disasters in the war rendered him so popular that late in 1852 the King and his favourite, Maung Bwa, decided to rid themselves of him. Mindon, warned of his danger, fled the capital on the 17th of December 1852 with his younger brother, the Kanoung Prince. Adherents flocked to them, so that they were soon in open rebellion. In traditional fashion they made their way to Shwebo, the original seat of the Alaungpaya Dynasty, which they entered by force. Next their forces threatened Amarapoora itself. There followed confused and sporadic fighting for some weeks in the environs of the capital. At last, on the 18th of February 1853, the Magwe Mingyi, the most experienced and distinguished of the Wungyis of the Hlutdaw,¹ declared for Mindon and seized the chief members of Pagan's Government. Mindon's troops, led by his younger brother, entered the capital and proclaimed him king. Then after a respectable interval, during which—in traditional fashion also—all those considered dangerous to the new regime were conveniently put out of the way, Mindon left Shwebo, where he had remained throughout the rebellion, and made his entry into the capital. Pagan Min, contrary to the usual practice, was permitted by his more humane successor to live out his life in honourable captivity, and survived until 1881.

The new king was one of the most remarkable and interesting personalities in Burmese history. It was not so much in his intelligence—though that was above the average—as in his moral character, his hatred of bloodshed, and his high sense of public duty, that he surpassed the rest of his dynasty. After the horrors of the previous reigns, his justice and magnanimity won for him the love of his people, who, according to Yule,² uniformly and with apparent sincerity declared that they had never had a King so just and so beneficent. From the moment of his accession he

¹ The Supreme Council in the Burmese Government; *vide* Appendix I.

² *Op. cit.*, *supra*, p. 194.

adopted a friendly attitude towards the British. As soon as possible he released all Europeans imprisoned at Amarapoora during the war, and dispatched two of them, the Italian priests, Father Domingo and Father Abbona of the Catholic Mission, to Ava, to explain to the British the situation that had arisen, and to announce that Envoys to treat for peace would follow, when the 'exceedingly onerous, varied and extensive' business of governing 'the country, the Umbrella, and Palace' had been settled.¹

Mindon's emissaries arriving at Myede on the 27th of January, about 50 miles north of Prome, to their surprise found the British there. The Governor-General's Proclamation annexing Pegu had been read by Phayre with due ceremonial in Rangoon on the 20th of December. The new Commissioner had then hastened up to Prome, immediately north of which it had been the original intention of the British to establish the boundary. But Prome, he discovered on arrival, was a death-trap for troops. Moreover, the Irrawaddy valley to the north was famous for its teak forests. As the Proclamation gave no details of the boundary, about which there existed in people's minds the greatest vagueness, and as the Golden Feet still disdained to take any notice of the British, what therefore prevented an advance to a more suitable and healthy site for a cantonment and the inclusion of a rich belt of teak forest in British territory?

Phayre urged the step; it was unhesitatingly sanctioned by the Government of India. He would have gone further, but was dissuaded therefrom by his colleagues, Godwin and Lambert, who urged that any further occupation of territory might drive the Burmese Government to desperation, and so put an end to all chances of securing a treaty.²

Evidently Mindon thought that the British had no intention of permanently occupying Pegu, but would be content to retire from the conquered territory on payment of a sufficiently heavy indemnity. Imagine, therefore, his chagrin when Father Domingo on his return to Shwebo handed to the King a Burmese translation of the Proclamation of Annexation. Only gradually did it dawn upon him that the British would treat solely upon

¹ *Vide infra*, p. 22.

² *I.S.P.*, Cons. 29 April 1853, No. 71.

the basis of the cession of Pegu. At first he hoped that by a personal interview with Godwin and Phayre he could persuade them to evacuate the country. 'The General and Commissioner could come in a steamer, and I could throw aside my state and converse, without my ministers being present,' he said to Father Domingo.¹ If only the British realized that he was a different sort of man from his deposed brother they would not, he thought, take such a drastic step as to deprive him of his 'ancestors' property'.

The negotiations for a treaty, therefore, as Dalhousie had correctly anticipated, were doomed to failure. Although a Burmese Mission, headed by the senior Wungyi of the Hlutdaw, the Magwe Mingyi, arrived at Prome on March 31, it was soon obvious that Mindon either would not, or dared not, give his assent to a treaty recognizing the cession of territory to a foreign power. At first the Envoy adopted a humble tone, acknowledging Burmese responsibility for the outbreak of war, and saying they had not a jot to urge in defence of themselves. He begged for generous treatment to be accorded to Mindon Min because of his well-known opposition to the war. The annexation of so much territory, he said, left the Burmese Government with no abode and like children without parents.² When the Commissioners pointed out that they had no power to rescind the annexation he began to haggle over the question of the boundary line. The wearisome discussion dragged on for over a month at the most trying period of the hot weather. Finally, as a forlorn hope, and largely to test the sincerity of the Burmese arguments regarding the frontier, Lord Dalhousie authorized the Commissioners to give up the 'debatable territory' between Prome and Myede if the Burmese would sign a treaty recognizing the British acquisition of Pegu. Then the Wungyi displayed the true nature of the Burmese side of the negotiations by remarking that he had no power to sign away any territory but could only offer to pay the expenses of the war. The negotiations, therefore, were summarily broken off, and the Myede boundary was retained by the British.

The anomalous situation that arose with the breakdown of

¹ *Ibid.*, Cons. 24 March 1853, No. 75.

² *Ibid.*, Cons. 29 April 1853, No. 66.

negotiations was fraught with many dangers. The Kanaung Prince, Mindon's brother and Heir Apparent, was known to desire the renewal of war, and although Dalhousie and Phayre believed that Mindon Min had neither the desire nor the power to renew hostilities, there was still the possibility that the old war party might once more get the upper hand. The situation was partially relieved in the middle of June by the arrival of a letter,¹ written by the Kyauk Maw Mingyi at the instance of the King, assuring Phayre that the Burmese had no desire for war, and announcing that orders had been issued to Burmese frontier officials not to allow any attacks upon British garrisons. Lord Dalhousie, therefore, deemed the occasion ripe for proclamation of the official termination of hostilities. The King's declarations, he said, afforded just about as much guarantee as a treaty 'with the faithless leaders of this proud false people', but he proposed to accept them. 'All that is known of his character and past history, his motives in effecting the revolution by which his brother was deposed; his conduct towards his antagonists; his proceedings in relation to us; his treatment of the prisoners and his present voluntary liberation of them; mark him among Burmese rulers as a prince of rare sagacity, humanity and forbearance, and stamp his present declarations with the seal of sincerity.'² So the army was given the customary donation batta. But no public thanksgiving like that which marked the close of the Sikh War was offered up—'the present occasion hardly justifies a similar solemnity' remarked Lord Dalhousie. Nor for the present was any step taken to reduce the army in Pegu from a war to a peace footing. Even the question of a war medal was reserved for the consideration of Her Majesty's Government.

5. *Thomas Spears, British Correspondent at the Court of Ava*

The difficult situation resulting from the breakdown of negotiations in May 1853 had only been partially relieved by the King's declaration and the British proclamation of peace. Diplomatic relations between Calcutta and Amarapoora were still as far as

¹ *I.S.P.*, Cons. 29 July 1853, No. 26, Annexure A.

² *Ibid.*, Cons. 29 July 1853, No. 27.

ever from being renewed, notwithstanding the King's obvious friendliness. Under such circumstances all sorts of misunderstandings might arise provocative of war. Each side was totally in the dark regarding the intentions of the other, save in so far as the gossip of travellers and the depositions of paid agents and spies threw uncertain light upon the situation. Naturally, therefore, alarmist rumours of the most impossible nature grew current on both sides of the frontier. The Burmese lived in expectation of a further British advance so soon as weather conditions should permit. The Rangoon and Calcutta press warned Government of Burmese preparations to invade Pegu, and asserted that the Court of Ava was giving secret encouragement to dacoit leaders whose hydra-headed persistency so severely handicapped the British in their efforts to settle the administration of the country. Even Captain Latter,¹ the Deputy Commissioner of Prome, who had won a great reputation for gallantry in the war and was a first-class Burmese linguist, so far lost his head as to give credence to the stories of Burmese hostile preparations that he received from his extremely untrustworthy spies.

As soon as he heard of the breakdown of negotiations Lord Dalhousie realized that in the absence of direct contact with the Court of Ava some indirect means must be established. Early in June information of impending Burmese attacks received from Latter led the Governor-General to write officially to Phayre requesting him to spare no expense in establishing a satisfactory system of intelligence.² It was not long before the right man for the purpose turned up. Among the European prisoners released by Mindon Min was a certain Scottish trader named Thomas Spears, who arrived at Prome on 28 June, on his way to Calcutta, and so much impressed General Godwin with his knowledge of affairs at Amarapoora that his deposition, taken down by Major Grant Allan, the Deputy Q.M.G. in charge of intelligence, was forwarded to the Governor-General.³

In it he conclusively demonstrated the baselessness of the hectic rumours that the excitable Latter was reporting with

¹ *Vide* letter No. 3, note 3, and *passim*.

² *Vide* Letter No. 39.

³ *I.S.P.*, Cons. 26 Aug. 1853, Nos. 9, 10.

growing urgency. The new King, he said, was amiable and sensible, and as long as he lived war would not be renewed by the Burmese. His brother, Maung Gyauk, the Heir Apparent, had been warlike, but had now adopted Mindon's views. Moreover, he held Mindon in too great respect to intrigue against him. The reports of the assembly of a large force were true; but this was purely a defensive measure due to Burmese fears of a further British advance. Now that he was assured that no further military operations were contemplated by the British, Mindon would recall his troops. Burmese power was greatly weakened by the loss of Pegu, and with the royal treasury empty a renewal of war by the Burmese was unthinkable.

Spears was a native of Kirkcaldy in Fifeshire. He had spent many years in Burma as a trader in piece-goods, and especially in a class of silk much in demand among the Burmese and called by them *sa pa zan*, which he imported from Europe. He stated in his deposition that on the 24th of January 1852 he had been arrested by the Burmese, placed in irons, and confined in the jail at Amarapoora along with other European residents. His books, clothes, and furniture had been burnt, and his merchandise, which he valued at 72,000 silver ticals of Burmese currency (i.e. about Rs. 90,000 of Company's currency), confiscated by the Burmese Government. In prison only the devotion of his servants had saved him from starvation. Mindon's rebellion, however, had brought him not only freedom but royal favour, although his goods had not yet been restored to him. When, consequent upon the Kyauk Maw Mingyi's letter to Phayre, foreign merchants were permitted to leave the country, Mindon, hearing that Spears purposed going to Calcutta on business, summoned him up to Shwebo, and communicated to him certain fantastic peace proposals for transmission to Phayre.¹

The Commissioner, though scouting the proposals, was as much impressed as Godwin had been with the sound judgement and good sense shown by Spears in his discussion of affairs at the Burmese Court. Here was a man of intelligence who evidently knew what he was talking about. A man such as this at Amarapoora, acting as purveyor of news to the British, would be invaluable in providing an antidote to the absurd and dan-

¹ *Vide* Letter No. 51.

Thomas Spears, British Correspondent at the Court of Ava xliii
gerous rumours that flowed in with such amazing persistence. He therefore suggested to the Governor-General the feasibility of employing Spears as a confidential correspondent at the Burmese capital.

At first, however, Lord Dalhousie hesitated regarding the employment of Spears in this capacity. 'His being so could hardly be kept secret', he wrote on 1 August.¹ 'If it were known, he would be liable to outrage; and if outraged, he would, from his quasi-official character and his British birth, be of more importance than another might be; and so would be more likely to involve this Government in responsibilities.'

In the meantime Captain Latter's letters of warning increased in number and intensity to such a degree that at last Lord Dalhousie could stand it no longer. On 30 August he penned a thundering letter to Phayre, threatening Latter with removal from his post if his predictions proved false.² A few days later he announced to his Council his intention of going to Burma as early as possible to investigate matters for himself on the spot.

'Some of these letters,' he wrote,³ 'coupled with the correspondence which one reads in the newspapers, exhibit in a degree, which to my mind is very painful, the prevalence of that worst of Indian epidemics, the spirit of croaking; which sees disaster in every position, and sets down on every occasion the British Government as the probable loser, whatever may be the antagonist or our own strength.

'Since 1848 I have frequently noted the extent of its prevalence with deep disgust; and no one can fail to note it now.

'Such was not the spirit by which India was won, but it is the spirit which more than any other is likely to create the possibility of our one day losing what we have gained. Captain Latter is as brave a man as ever drew a sword, and has proved himself so. But whether it be from vanity, or love of gossip, or some other feeling, he has for many months past been prognosticating (on information alleged to be infallible) attacks, preparations and invasions, and even now, as will be seen, he predicts that unless his views be followed, the province during the cold weather will be "ravaged to the walls of Rangoon". All his former predictions of attack, I need hardly say, have failed. His present prophecies, given in detail down to the very order of march of the invaders, are contradicted by every other information

¹ Letter No. 52.

² Letter No. 58.

³ *I.S.P.*, Cons. 30 Sept., No. 36.

we have; and I have no doubt they will be falsified like the rest by the event.

‘But the presence upon the frontier of such a man does much more mischief than would be produced by the terrors of even an arrant coward; for the known gallantry of his personal conduct gives weight and plausibility to rumours creative of alarm when they proceed from him.

‘These things of themselves appear to me to furnish strong ground for the doubt whether Captain Latter should be permitted to remain in a frontier charge at all.’

Under these circumstances the need of a reliable correspondent was urgent.

‘Good intelligence is especially valuable to me when pestered with the gossiping panics of officers on our frontier,’ Dalhousie wrote to Phayre on 18 September.¹ ‘Pay, therefore, whatever may be liberal. It might perhaps tend to ensure trustworthy news to give a fixed salary, and to say that at the end of each year a further sum will be given, if during the course of it intelligence of all public events shall have been given, *regular, early and correct.*’

Phayre, therefore, had to continue his difficult search for a correspondent. A prominent Armenian, Mr. Johannes Sarkies Manook, was considered for the post. His report of affairs at the capital² was very similar to Spears’; but Phayre heard that he was addicted to drink. Then another Armenian named Jacob was tried. But a letter of his, forwarded by Phayre to the Governor-General,³ elicited from him merely the laconic remark: ‘I hope his intelligence is more correct than his spelling, or we shall not have a good bargain. I will see Mr. Spears again.’ Nothing was actually settled until Lord Dalhousie had talked the matter over with Phayre during his visit to Rangoon at the end of the year. Spears was then about to return to Amara-poor, and Phayre took advantage of this fact to overcome the Governor-General’s last scruples against his appointment. Lord Dalhousie’s official minute⁴ of 5 January 1854 conveying sanction of this step throws so much light upon the nature of the new

¹ Letter No. 62.

² *I.S.P.*, Cons. 30 Sept. 1853, No. 23.

³ Letter No. 69.

⁴ *I.S.P.*, Cons. 27 Jan. 1854, No. 66.

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post that no apology is needed for quoting it in full. It runs thus :

‘The necessity for having a correspondent at the Capital of Burmah, when we have no official Agent there, was apparent from the time when we first occupied this province. The innumerable reports which have flooded the country during the past season alarming many and misleading almost the whole of the community both in India and in England, have proved the urgency of this necessity for having some agent at Amarapoora upon whom the Government may depend for regular and trustworthy information regarding the course of events in Burmah.

‘There has been great difficulty in finding a fitting Agent for this purpose. An official person in the absence of all Treaty between the countries could not be sent. Even if circumstances were different there would have been no good reason to believe that an official person would have been tolerated by the Court of Ava now, any more than they were formerly when we had a right by Treaty to nominate them. The only proper substitute for an official Agent appeared to be some resident at the Capital, of good character and known to be well disposed towards the British Government.

‘The return of Mr. Spears to Amarapoora is calculated to lessen the difficulty that has hitherto been found in selecting a trustworthy correspondent. Mr. Spears is a gentleman of high character, of great intelligence, thoroughly acquainted with the Burma people, among whom he has resided for fifteen years and heretofore treated with kindness and consideration by the King and the authorities at the capital where he lived.

‘Mr. Spears is himself of opinion that the fact of his being known to correspond with the commissioner, (which he would not attempt or wish to conceal) would rather gain additional consideration for him and add to his security, than expose him to any suspicion or danger personally while carrying on his mercantile business at Ameerapoora, which he proposes to do.

‘If the Commissioner continues to feel confidence in Mr. Spears, and if that gentleman would undertake the duty, I think it would be of great public advantage that his services should be obtained as correspondent. Mr. Spears of course must be made to understand that he has no official character whatever and must not assume any at Ameerapoora directly or indirectly. He should not attempt to conceal that he corresponds with the Commissioner, but no inference, drawn from that fact, of his being invested with an official character, should be admitted.

‘The news-writer at Cabul receives a salary of Rs. 400 a month. Mr. Spears will not carry on his correspondence under the risks which are run by the correspondent at Cabul, and which are the justification for allowing so high a salary to a native news-writer. But his position and the extreme importance of obtaining good intelligence, whereby we may be warned if attack is threatened, and the public mind may be kept free from unfounded alarm when no hostilities are really intended, seem to me to call for the payment of a similar salary to Mr. Spears, at least for the present.

‘A sum of Rs. 250 a month may be allotted to him as a fixed salary. If at the end of each year he shall have communicated with the Commissioner at least twice a month at regular intervals, (his letters being delivered to the Commanding Officer at Meeaday) and if his intelligence shall be found early, full and correct, his salary for each past year may be made up to Rs. 400 per mensem as in the case of the correspondent at Cabul.

‘The letters should, if possible, be timed so as to reach Rangoon not long before the despatch of each mail to Calcutta, and the Commissioner should make his own arrangement for the transmission of the letters onward from Meeaday to Rangoon.’

Spears returned to Amarapoora to assume his new duties late in December 1853. He at once made Mindon Min aware of his position and its duties. The latter was delighted with the arrangement. Here, he felt, was a channel through which he could express his views to the British authorities. He welcomed the appointment also as affording him greater opportunities of demonstrating his friendliness since he cherished the quixotic (yet pathetic) hope that if only the British realized how true a friend he was willing to be towards them they would voluntarily restore Pegu to him. ‘He has given me full liberty to write anything I like and to whom I like’, wrote Spears to Phayre in one of his earliest letters.¹ The only difficulties that arose were due to the King’s inability to realize that Spears was not an official British representative, through whom he could conduct business with the Commissioner of Pegu or the Government of India. On several occasions, in fact, he caused the canny Scot no little embarrassment by ordering him to write letters to Phayre on certain important matters of Anglo-Burmese relations, and by

¹ 8 Jan. 1854; No. 83 in this volume.

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practically dictating the contents.¹ Often, in conversation with Spears, Mindon would give him messages expressly to be conveyed to Phayre.²

It says much for Spears that under these circumstances he never once lost sight of his real position at Amarapoora.³ 'You need not be at all afraid that I will ever try to assume any political position here' he wrote in one of his early letters to Phayre.⁴ 'But it has cost me some pains to explain to the King how I am situated.' As it was, Mindon's attitude towards him gave to his letters to Phayre added interest and importance. 'These letters cannot be considered official', wrote the Governor-General, in a minute dated the 29th of March 1854, when circulating to his Council the second batch of Spears' letters received from Phayre. 'Nevertheless they have all the importance of official letters, not only from the intelligence and good judgment exhibited by the writer, but because portions of the series . . . were declaredly written at the instance of the King himself.'⁵

To Phayre he wrote:⁶ 'We have apparently found a very safe and sensible and judicious correspondent.' And similar praise is to be found recurring in his later letters.

¹ *Vide* Letter No. 90, para. 1, where Spears apologizes to Phayre for two of these.

² *Vide* Letter No. 94 for a good example of this kind.

³ In his final dispatch to the Government of India on the subject of the Mission to Ava (1855) Phayre wrote thus of Spears: 'Mr. Spears has been about eighteen years in Burmah. He is very much respected by the King, is sent for to the Palace nearly every day, sometimes twice a day, and is evidently regarded by the King almost as his servant and subject. His Majesty is aware that Mr. Spears receives a salary from our Government, and while we were at Amarapoora offered him Five Hundred Rupees a month for himself. This was done with no very clear object as far as I can gather, except that he thought Mr. Spears would then "plead his cause", but what specific advantage he expected from this I cannot understand. Mr. Spears, however, informed me he told the King it was utterly impossible he could receive a salary from him. Mr. Spears, with a strong regard for the King, who has been very kind to him, does not forget his duties as a British subject. It is very much to his credit that, isolated for so many years at Amarapoora, he has not mixed himself up with local intrigues; but has honourably maintained the character of an European and an Englishman.' (*I.S.P.*, Cons. 25 Jan. 1856, No. 13, dated Rangoon 9 Nov. 1855.)

⁴ 7 March 1854, Letter No. 96. *Vide* also the postscript in which Spears relates his difficulty in persuading Mindon not to send him on an official mission to the British.

⁵ *I.S.P.*, Cons. 31 March 1854, No. 38.

⁶ Letter No. 97 of 29 March 1854.

But Thomas Spears was no mere news-writer.

Little by little all the intercourse of Ava with the British came to pass unofficially through his hands. Every matter affecting his relations with the British was discussed privately by Mindon with him before official action was taken. Phayre too apprised him of all matters of importance from the British side. And well it was for both sides that good fortune had thrown in their way an intermediary so honest, wise, and statesmanlike. The Crimean War was looming ahead when Spears first became British correspondent at Ava. The ignorance of the Burmese Court in matters of foreign politics was pathetic.¹ Hardly a man there knew anything of the relative strength of the European powers or even of the geography of the world; and such as did, we are told, dared not enlighten the King as to the true powerlessness of his kingdom in world affairs. John Stuart² tells the delightful story of Mindon calling for a map of the world and, upon England being pointed out to him, exclaiming: 'Yes, I always knew that England is a very small country.' But when Burma was also pointed out to him he was so enraged at its smallness that his wretched instructor hastily spread out both hands over the map, covering half the world, and declared that that was Burma. Mindon, like other Burmese monarchs before him, believed that, notwithstanding the evidence of their power indicated by the First and Second Burmese Wars, the British could not for long hold Pegu. At the time of the Crimean War the Armenians at the Burmese capital poured into the royal ears stories of the overwhelming might of Russia similar to those with which our ears were beguiled not so many years ago. The Russians, they said, would invade and conquer India, so that an opportunity would soon arise for driving the exhausted British out of Pegu.³

The value to both the British and the Burmese of such a man as Spears at Amarapoora is obvious. Never once did he lose his head. With his bluff hearty manner, so agreeable with Burmans,

¹ *Vide* Letter No. 157, para. 1, where Spears conjectures that Mindon Min had never before heard of the Khan of Khelat, and Letter No. 167, where the Burmese Envoy inquired of Phayre whether the 'Lord Company' were still alive.

² *Burma through the Centuries* (London, 1910), p. 154.

³ *Vide* Spears's letter of 30 April 1854 (No. 117).

Thomas Spears, British Correspondent at the Court of Ava xlix and his intelligent grasp of their point of view, he maintained the trust of the King, who found that the path of safety lay in the direction consistently indicated by Spears. To the British, on the other hand, he was able to give a juster appreciation and saner view of the condition of affairs at Amarapoora, counter-acting alarmist reports and preventing misunderstandings. Lord Dalhousie in March 1854, when circulating the second batch of his letters to the Governor-General's Council, emphatically expressed the opinion that they showed that there was, 'humanly speaking, no chance whatever of the renewal of war'.¹ And he wrote home gaily to Sir George Couper:

'There is perfect quiescence, and the King is actually withdrawing from the frontier his whole troops. Nay the *entente cordiale* is becoming almost ludicrous. For at this very time, at which the Press is telling everybody that the Burmese are coming down with 80,000 men to invade us, I am actually making a contract with the King himself to sell us all the wheat in Burmah—he monopolises the whole—for our commissariat in the province, which we have just conquered from him! Don't mention this, for I have not reported the bargain here till it shall have been completed. But is it not a comical fact!' ²

The reference here is to a business deal between the British and Mindon Min carried out through the instrumentality of Spears soon after his return to Amarapoora. The economic condition of Pegu at the time of its annexation was deplorable. The Burmese administration of the old Talaing kingdom was not merely corrupt—administration everywhere in the Far East was that—but it was so harsh as to strangle the natural economic development of what should have been one of the richest agricultural districts in the world. To this state of affairs were added the ravages of war and the widespread pillage and terrorism of dacoity. The British advance through Pegu in 1852 had occurred during the rice-planting season. The work had thus been so dislocated that a severe famine followed in 1853. Men, it was said, murdered each other for a handful of rice. All the grain, therefore, required by the British armies had to be imported from India. Normally Upper Burma was not quite

¹ *I.S.P.*, Cons. 31 March 1854, No. 38.

² Baird, *op. cit.*, p. 293.

self-sufficing in the matter of its rice supply, but imported a certain amount from the South. It did, however, produce a surplus of wheat and gram, which, through the operation of the system of royal monopolies, found its way into the royal granaries. Thus it came about that Mindon Min was able early in 1854 to offer to the British from 15,000 to 20,000 baskets of wheat and about 10,000 of gram, to be delivered at Prome at the rate of Rs. 250 and Rs. 200 respectively per hundred baskets. The price was high, but Lord Dalhousie without hesitation sanctioned the projected purchase 'even though a royal price should be demanded'. 'We shall obtain,' he wrote officially, 'a singular but a very efficacious additional guarantee for the maintenance of peace.'¹ So there arose the Gilbertian situation of the Burmese monarch supplying grain to the British armies of occupation, and deriving from his handsome profits some small consolation for the loss of the fair province of Pegu.

Spears apparently derived nothing more out of the transaction than the satisfaction of having thereby established himself more firmly in the good opinion of both sides, and of having changed the whole complexion of Anglo-Burmese relations. Nor did he ever seek to take unfair advantage of his privileged position. He was, of course, as a Burma merchant vastly interested in the maintenance of good will between Calcutta and Amarapoora. A further rupture might spell commercial ruin for him, and he had already tasted the bitter cup of the prisoner of war in Burma. When the difficulties and temptations of his position are considered, the wonder is that for over seven years he carried out his delicate task to the complete satisfaction of both Governments, relinquishing it only when business exigencies caused him to return temporarily to Europe in 1861. At no other time in their whole history were Burmese relations with Great Britain on so amicable a footing, or was there so near an approach to a mutual understanding, as during the period when Thomas Spears was British correspondent at Amarapoora. And it must not be forgotten that both the Crimean War and the Indian Mutiny fell within that period.

In his initial minute regarding the appointment of Spears Lord Dalhousie had shown that his only misgiving was lest the

¹ *I.S.P.*, Cons. 31 Mar. 1854, No. 38.

Thomas Spears, British Correspondent at the Court of Ava li
 former should be employed in any quasi-official capacity, as if he were the representative of the Government of India. Only on one occasion did it appear necessary to remind Phayre that there seemed to be a tendency to forget the unofficial character of Spears's position. After the Burmese raid over the Myede frontier early in 1855¹ Phayre addressed an official remonstrance to the Kyauk Maw Mingyi, the Wungyi in the Burmese Hludaw in charge of relations with the British.² But not receiving an answer in due course he made use of the good offices of Spears to move the Court of Ava to take action.³ This plainly appeared in the official reply, which was transmitted to the Governor-General, and in which it was stated that 'on Mr. Spears representing the occurrence of this outrage orders were issued'.⁴ Lord Dalhousie therefore saw fit to remind Phayre that Spears was employed at Amarapoora by Government solely to transmit intelligence, and was not recognized in any official character; and although he had been frequently the medium of friendly and non-official communication between the King, the Wungyi, and the Commissioner of Pegu he was not 'to act in any way apparently as an Agent for the Government'.⁵ Probably the real error in this case lay in the Court of Ava mentioning Spears's name in the matter. And it would seem that Dalhousie's official statement of Spears's position was intended rather as a safeguard than as designed to curtail the British correspondent's diplomatic activities. Certainly the rigidity of the rule was wisely relaxed in practice, for so long as Spears remained at the Burmese capital practically all the intercourse between the British authorities and the Court of Ava passed, 'unofficially' but no less really, through his hands, to the benefit of both sides.⁶

¹ *Vide* Phayre to Dalhousie, 2 April 1855, No. 190.

² *I.S.P.*, Cons. 29 June 1855, No. 27.

³ *Vide* Letters Nos. 205-7 for Spears's account of his action in the matter.

⁴ *I.S.P.*, Cons. 29 June 1855, No. 43.

⁵ *Ibid.*, Cons. 31 Aug. 1855, No. 3 (also in Rangoon Secretariat File No. 6/1855).

⁶ Rangoon Secretariat Files Nos. 6/1855, 18/1856, 43/1858, 11/1859, and 40/1860 contain correspondence showing that at the end of each year of his employment up to 1860 Spears received the promised lump sum raising his salary to the equivalent of Rs. 400 a month. As the Rangoon records are very defective for this period, the absence of references to him after 1860 cannot be held to signify that only up to that date did he receive the special payment. Spears left Burma to go to Europe on business late in 1861 or early in

He paved the way for the re-establishment of the British Residency at Mandalay, Mindon Min's new city, in 1862.

6. *The Interchange of Missions, 1854-5*

During the year 1854 Anglo-Burmese relations continued steadily to improve. But the path was no rosy one. British suspicions of the complicity of the Court of Ava in the depredations of Gaung Gyi and other dacoit *bos* were still strong, and the revelations connected with the discovery of the pagoda conspiracy at Rangoon had left an unpleasant taste.¹ The Burmese on their part alternated between alarm at the prospect of a further British advance and quixotic hopes—fostered by the Armenians at Amarapooora—of an overwhelming Russian attack upon India and consequent British withdrawal from Pegu. Thomas Spears was kept busy assuring each side of the pacific intentions of the other. Dalhousie and Phayre, of course, had always discountenanced alarmist rumours, but the 'croakings' of the Anglo-Indian press and the fears of subordinates whose responsibilities were insufficient to impose moderation upon their counsels were a source of embarrassment upon which any check was welcome. Mindon Min, though at first unconvinced regarding the direction of British policy, had fully

1862 after settling his family in a house he owned in Phayre Street, Rangoon. His wife was a Burmese lady, Ma Cho, by whom he had six children: John, born at Amarapooora in 1846, Margaret in 1851, Isabella in 1855, Catherine in 1857, William born at Mandalay in 1859, and Anna born in Rangoon after her father's departure for Europe in 1862. During his absence, which extended until late in the year 1867, his friend R. S. Edwards, then Collector of Customs at Rangoon, acted as his agent, collecting rents of his property in Rangoon and making all necessary disbursements on behalf of his wife. The two elder girls were sent to a boarding school in Calcutta. His last surviving child, William, who died at Rangoon in September, 1929, told me he well remembered the picture of Edwards returning along Phayre Street every morning from his exercise on his old pony with his Indian servant behind him using his umbrella to give master's pony a poke whenever it displayed an unconquerable tendency to drop off to sleep. Spears did not long survive his return to Burma. He was suffering from a severe illness when he landed, and died in February 1868. He was buried in Pazundaung cemetery, whither his wife followed him to be buried in the same grave some 25 years later. Their tombstone may still be seen standing under a large tree. For all the more personal details of Spears's life I am indebted to his son, the late William Spears, who kindly placed at my disposal such few family documents as still remain.

¹ *Vide* Letters Nos. 74 and 76.

decided where the path of safety lay. And although he carefully retreated before every effort to induce him to sign a treaty, nevertheless early in the year he sounded Spears as to the feasibility of sending a complimentary mission with presents to the Governor-General at Calcutta. Lord Dalhousie welcomed the overture. Not that he entertained hopes that anything definite would result from such a mission; but at least it would end the unreal situation that had arisen through the failure of negotiations in the previous year. And it would open the door for further negotiations. He let it be known, therefore, through the unofficial Spears, that in the event of a Burmese mission coming to Calcutta a similar return mission with presents would be dispatched to Amarapoora at an early date. So Burmese envoys, with a suite of not less than eighty persons and a present of enormous bulk—though not of corresponding value¹—made their way in the usual gilded barges and war-boats down the river to the British station of Myede, en route for Rangoon.

Then occurred the vexatious incident of the Kyauk Maw Mingyi's letter,² probably not unexpected by Phayre, which delayed the mission several weeks in Rangoon, and but for the efforts of Spears in Amarapoora might have had serious consequences. The sharp lesson read to the Wungyis of the Hlutdaw by Phayre's firm refusal to allow the mission to proceed until a letter couched in unexceptionable terms had been substituted for the rejected missive was necessary, and in the event contributed its share to the better understanding that was growing up between Calcutta and Amarapoora. During the enforced stay of the mission in Rangoon Phayre not only treated the envoys with a courteous consideration in striking contrast to previous Burmese behaviour to British envoys and residents at Ava, but by personal contact so won the heart of the old Dalla Wun that when the old man made a journey to pray at the Pegu Pagoda he sent the Commissioner a half-share of the merit acquired by the act. The arrangements made by the British authorities for their comfort and entertainment on the voyage to and from Calcutta, and during their stay there, vastly

¹ *Vide* Letter No. 163, note 1.

² *Vide* Letter No. 150, note 1.

pleased and impressed the envoys. On their return home every little detail was poured into the eager ears of their royal master, who decided that he in his turn would show the British, when their mission came up to Amarapoora, what true Burmese hospitality could be.

One little incident of their stay in Calcutta was not so readily recounted to Mindon Min, since at first no one could pluck up sufficient courage to relate it. It occurred during the farewell interview granted by the Governor-General to the envoys. At the moment when, after the usual compliments had been passed on both sides, the Burmese were expected to take their departure, they put forward an unexpected and surprisingly naïve plea for the restoration of Pegu, which Lord Dalhousie dramatically countered with the retort, translated to them by Phayre: 'You may tell the envoys that so long as the sun shines, which they see, those territories will never be restored to the kingdom of Ava.'¹ Ultimately, when the King got to know of this incident, it also was not without its effect upon him. Little by little some idea of the real condition of affairs was beginning to dawn upon him. Certain it is that while ignorance and the arrogance bred of it had been largely responsible for the fatal blunders of Burmese policy towards the British in the past, the change in the Burmese attitude under Mindon Min arose from a better understanding and juster appreciation of the British position and aims.

Lord Dalhousie's response to Mindon's gesture in sending the mission to Calcutta was the dispatch of the well-known mission to Ava headed by Phayre, the multifarious proceedings of which are set forth in Yule's fascinating volume.² Phayre's letters in this collection written while engaged upon the mission are necessarily scrappy and incomplete. He had obviously very little time for writing demi-officially, and naturally his narrative of events went into his official letters and report. In order therefore to afford the reader adequate information of the activities of the mission and at the same time to avoid a mere recapitulation of Yule's story, by way of notes, the lacunae in

¹ *Vide* note following Letter 176, pp. 268 et seq.

² *A Narrative of the Mission sent by the Governor-General of India to the Court of Ava in 1855* (London, 1858).

Phayre's demi-official letters have been filled in by the insertion of copious extracts from his official dispatches. These have never previously been used as historical material, since every writer who has dealt with the Ava Mission of 1855 has naturally gone for his material to the more easily accessible source, one indeed in which the utmost charm is combined with quite remarkable erudition. To the serious student of things Burmese there is probably no better introduction than Yule's book with its all-embracing scope and wealth of illustration.

In addition to Phayre's official dispatches and Yule's book there are two manuscript accounts of the Ava Mission worthy of note, both written by Phayre himself. One—an incomplete one—is in his private Journal, now in the possession of the University of Rangoon. The other, called by him 'my Journal of Conversations with the King, the Burmese Ministers and other persons at the Capital', was forwarded to the Governor-General immediately after the return of the Mission to Rangoon, and constituted the Envoy's official report, supplementing in great detail the dispatches, both official and demi-official, in which he had from time to time reported the progress of the Mission. The transcript of it occupies no less than 102 folio pages of Volume 196, *India Secret Proceedings*, at the India Office.¹ It covers the period beginning with Wednesday, 29 August, when the Mission had arrived at Kyauk Talon, seventeen miles from its destination, and ending with 22 October, the date of its departure from Amarapoora. Perhaps its main interest lies in the fact that Yule not merely based his account of this part of the Mission's activities upon it, but incorporated it almost *verbatim et seriatim* in his work.² Occasionally Yule fills in and brightens his account with picturesque details and personal touches not given by Phayre. The one, of course, was writing for the public, whereas the other's account was a confidential document for official consumption. Thus under 4 September, while Phayre's sole entry is 'No conversation requiring record', Yule gives a brief description of a Burmese comedy that was enacted in the portico of the Residency, and mentions that the day was spent by the members of the Mission

¹ No. 16 of Consultation dated 25 Jan. 1856.

² *Vide* Yule, *op. cit.*, London edition (1858), pp 59-129 and 192-203.

in touring the city. But some of the more confidential items of conversation recorded by Phayre do not appear in Yule's narrative; notably some of the more pointed references to the anti-British tendencies of the Armenians in Amarapoora made by Father Abbona, Spears, and Camaretta. In his final dispatch regarding the Mission¹ Phayre had written:

'As a great deal of information which would be useful and interesting to the public generally has been collected by the gentlemen of the Mission, should Government deem it proper to publish the same, I trust I may be excused for suggesting that very great care should be taken to prevent anything appearing in print, which may give offence to the King, or to any Burmese officers. Any expression capable of being represented as reflecting on either, would certainly be turned to account by those at Amarapoora, who desire to prejudice the King's mind against the British Government and its officers.'

The fact that several Armenians, notably Makertich, the Kalawun, later Governor of Malun, were in the service of the Burmese Government would partly account for the omissions. But it will easily be seen that confidential statements of the sort about to be quoted could not be incorporated in a work published so soon after the event. In his entry under 3 September Yule makes no mention of the following item in Father Abbona's conversation noted by Phayre on that day: 'With reference to the state of parties among the foreigners in Amarapoora, Father Abbona stated that the Armenians were violently on the side of Russia.² One had offered to go on a mission to Russia, but the King replied: 'No, I will never enter into correspondence with a Power at war with the English.'

'The Father was present at the Palace when Mr. Sarkies Manook lately returned from Bengal and Rangoon. This man is, I believe, the son of the Mr. Sarkies of the last war. The King asked him the news. He replied: "The English, Your Majesty, are completely finished," referring to the siege of Sebastopol. Other Armenians are also continually reporting that thousands of English and French are being killed, and that the Russians cannot be conquered. In answer to a question of mine, Father Abbona said with an air of truth that

¹ *I.S.P.*, Cons. 25 Jan. 1856, No. 13, dated 9 Nov. 1855.

² N.B. The Crimean War was then in progress and the British and French were before Sebastopol.

he did not consider there was anyone in Amarapoorra who could be considered an emissary of Russia. Some few months ago, a man named Jose, who was apparently an Italian by birth, came to Amarapoorra and called on him with numerous certificates, and stated himself to be a Catholic. The man had afterwards gone among the Armenians and represented himself as a schismatic Armenian. Father Abbona considered him as a swindler, and he lately left Amarapoorra to go to Rangoon.'

Phayre's private Journal takes up the story of the Mission on the evening of 1 August, when he embarked on the flat Sutlej preparatory to departing for Amarapoorra on the following morning. But it ends abruptly with the entry of 11 September, two days before the official reception of the Mission by the King. It therefore does not cover the most interesting and important period of the Mission's activities. The Journal is in two volumes. The entry under 11 September comes right at the end of the first volume, but the second starts at 1 January 1859, and no reference is made in either which gives any explanation of the gap. Is there—or was there—an intervening volume? Diligent search and inquiry have not revealed one. The strong probability is that by 10 September the task of writing up two journals, one for his private delectation and the other as an official record, had become too lengthy a task. The latter, it must be realized, was not merely a copy of the former. Incidents of purely personal interest in the private Journal do not appear in the other, and often the same incidents or conversation will be described in both in different language, or will be mentioned with less detail in the private document. It must further be remembered that up to 10 September Phayre's writing included not only these two journals but lengthy official letters to the Government of India and less lengthy demi-official ones to the eager Dalhousie in the Nilgiri Hills, anxiously awaiting the arrival of each mail from Rangoon. When the preliminaries had been settled and the real official work of the Mission began, the elaborate ceremonies, of which detailed accounts had to be written, and the lengthy conversations with important personages, which had to be reported verbatim, would render it physically impossible for the Envoy to maintain two journals; and the private one would naturally have to be sacrificed. Further support for this assump-

tion is to be found in the fact that this is not the only gap in Phayre's private Journal. There are many; and all appear to have come at times when he was overwhelmed with official business.

The Burmese reception of this Mission was remarkable. Never before in Burmese history had such liberal treatment or so kindly a welcome been bestowed upon foreign envoys. How vast was the change of attitude in one matter alone will be realized from the following entry in Phayre's official report:

'Mr. Camaretta is intrusted with the arrangements for the supply of provisions, the expenses for which, he pointedly assured me, was (*sic*) defrayed from the King's Treasury, and this declaration was, I believe, made at the express desire of his Majesty. It appears to have been the custom of the Burmese Government from time immemorial to defray the expense of provisions supplied to embassies arriving in the Country by levies of money from the outcasts of society—the lepers and the dead body burners. This course has heretofore been pursued, I believe, towards every Mission, whether from the British or the Chinese, and appears to have been adopted in order to evince to their own subjects a secret contempt of Foreigners of all Countries. The voluntary abandonment of such a barbarism speaks well for the King. He must have strong moral courage, as well as an amiable desire to do right, thus to relinquish a custom, which by the Burmese nobility has hitherto doubtless been regarded as the legitimate method of announcing, without incurring the penalty due to insolence, the superiority of their King and race over all others in the World.'¹

This significant change of attitude may have been due in large measure to the effect of the recent war upon the minds of the Burmese Ministers. They had received overwhelming demonstration of the hollowness of their military pretensions when confronted by the organized resources of a modern European power. Since then, during the four years that had elapsed, not one, but a succession of rude shocks had somewhat dashed their national self-confidence. They were beginning to realize that they were dealing with a Governor-General who meant every word he said. But this does not explain the unaffected kindness of the Mission's reception. Here the explanation must be sought in the personal characters of Phayre and Mindon Min.

¹ Phayre, *Notes of Conversations*, s.v. 29 Aug.

The former's long association with Burma and intimate knowledge of the customs, religion, and literature of its people rendered him sympathetic and considerate in his dealings with the Court to an extent that had won for him the genuine esteem of the King and his ministers. Like all Burmans, they delighted in meeting an Englishman who, they felt, understood them. Mindon Min especially had conceived a great admiration for Phayre, but he seems also to have been so favourably impressed with Lord Dalhousie's reception of the Burmese Mission at Calcutta that he was anxious to outdo him in his own reception of the British Mission. Possibly also at the back of his mind still lurked the hope that if he could but make the British realize how sincere was his regard for them, Pegu might one day be his again. But above all he was a man essentially kindly by nature.

'In personal demeanour,' wrote Phayre officially¹ to the Government of India soon after his return to Rangoon, 'the King was throughout our stay at the Capital most kind both to myself and to every member of the Mission. He attended almost daily to our personal comfort, and frequently asked if the European soldiers had everything they desired. Every day numerous dishes of Burmese sweetmeats, prepared under the superintendence of the Princess of Pukhan, a cousin of the King, were sent to us from the Palace, together with fruits and other viands, a portion being always expressly for the soldiers of the Escort. We all too were supplied with good and wholesome bread daily at the King's expense.'

In spite of the magnificence of its reception, however, the Mission left Amarapoora having failed to persuade the King to sign even the simple treaty of amity drafted by Dalhousie, which made no direct reference to the cession of Pegu. The reader of these letters will readily understand the King's position in the matter. It was admirably summed up by Phayre in another section of the letter quoted above.²

'It is probable,' he wrote, 'that a variety of motives urge the King not to sign a Treaty. In the first place there is not a doubt that he is keenly sensitive as to what may be written of him in the Chronicles of the Kings of Burmah. He thinks a good deal of this; and feels that his name might be dishonoured if connected with the yielding of territory, even tacitly. When he ordered me to be supplied with

¹ *I.S.P.*, Cons. 25 Jan. 1856, No. 13.

² *Ibid.*

a copy of the History of Burmah, I heard him give some directions in an undertone regarding the period up to which the History was to be given; and I find it is brought up to 1822, so as not to include the narrative of the loss of territory by his uncle. He, no doubt, considers that many chances may arise to render a treaty avoidable. Some of these appear rather wild to count upon, and it may be thought improbable that he should entertain them; but I have no doubt they enter into his calculations and prompt his evasion or refusal. First among these comes the War with Russia. He is told by Armenians, some of whom are bitter enemies to the British, and all hearty partizans of the Czar, that the Russians are invincible, that they will certainly conquer India, and he even expects we may have to withdraw troops from Pegu to defend India. The Santal insurrection has been much magnified, and this has furnished its quantum in leading him to suppose that his opportunity looms in the distance. The excuse about a new Governor-General probably granting better terms, was I think more a clumsy device for delay, (which they abandoned when they saw it put them into a corner), than a serious belief that such might be the case. By the proposed mission to the Emperor of the French, which I was informed of by the Woongyee, I suppose the King to have the idea that the Emperor might influence the Queen of England in his favor, and I incline to think that some articles in the London papers, particularly in one called the "Press" (which I have referred to in Amarapoorra), have been represented to the King as showing that he is likely to meet with a more favourable hearing in England than in India.¹

Lord Dalhousie, however, was more than satisfied with the results of the Mission. As has been shown already, he viewed the treaty question in its true perspective, and hence was able to form a just estimate of Phayre's real achievement in cementing Anglo-Burmese good will. The Mission had been sent primarily to 'reciprocate the friendly feeling' that had been expressed by Mindon Min to the Government of India, and to 'confirm the amicable relations' that were growing up between the states. In this he announced it had been eminently successful.² Although no treaty had materialized with which to gladden the hearts of the home authorities he could console himself with the reflection that no Mission from any state had ever before received

¹ *Vide*, Yule, *op. cit.*, pp. 194-5, for a similar passage on the same subject.

² *Vide* Letter No. 242, note 5, for Dalhousie's Minute of 13 Dec. 1855 in which he summed up the results of the Mission.

such marks of honour from the Court of Ava. Further, it had returned 'charged with reiterated and solemn assurances, which were apparently altogether sincere', of the King's earnest desire 'to maintain the most friendly and closest relations with us'. 'I for my part', he concluded, 'am entirely content with these results of the Mission; and I desire to record my firm conviction, that peace with Burma is to the full as secure as any written Treaty could have made it.'¹

7. Dalhousie's relations with Phayre

Of the many other subjects treated in these letters, the limits of space forbid even their mere indication. There is much to be gleaned of such major matters of interest as the early development of the new city and port of Rangoon, the operations against dacoits, notably the great leaders Myat Tun and Gaung Gyi, the machinations of the mysterious 'General' Dorgoni, the establishment of internal communications of all kinds, and the multifarious activities that fell to the lot of men superimposing an entirely new governmental system upon a people unaccustomed to either a strong or a just central Government, and with local institutions, not unlike the medieval feudal ones of Europe, that tended to degenerate rapidly into chaos during a period of interregnum. On one still unsettled question of Anglo-Burmese history these letters throw hardly any light, whether the administration introduced by the British made adequate use of, or was sufficiently akin to, already existing social institutions and traditions. Competent observers have demonstrated the grave errors in this connexion committed during the introduction of British administration into Upper Burma after its annexation in 1886. In Upper Burma society, and the local institutions arising therefrom, were vital and complete in themselves for the somewhat primitive needs of the people. British administration was planted there by men trained in British-Indian methods, who did not possess that intimate acquaintance with things Burmese without which serious blunders were inevitable. But with regard to Pegu in the period after 1852 the question has still to be answered to what extent the Burmese devastation and depopulation of the old Talaing

¹ *Ibid.*

Kingdom during the century 1752–1852 had destroyed its social system. So far as the local administration introduced by Phayre is concerned, it presents striking analogies to that of British India. In his memorandum of 1 December 1852¹ on the future organization of the new province Phayre mentions that the administration is to be modelled on that of the Tenasserim Provinces, but he gives the Indian equivalent for all the subordinate native officers he proposes to establish, and the only difference that he hints at between the two is, one merely of nomenclature. Thus he describes the Sitkes, to be appointed in the principal towns, as analogous to Sudder Ameen, and the Gaungs for the several quarters of those towns as equivalent to Police Jemadars. The Gaunggyoks for Divisions, and the Thugyis for Circles, he mentions as analogous to Extra Assistants of the Punjab and Patails respectively. It looks as if for all Phayre's knowledge of the Burmese, Indian ideas of administration prevailed in the British reorganization of the conquered Province. And it must be remembered that, with the exception of the brilliant and unstable Captain Latter, very few of the British officers appointed to administrative posts knew more than a smattering, if anything, of the Burmese language. Most of them held their commissions in the native regiments of the Bengal and Madras armies. The subject still awaits the investigator. It must suffice here merely to indicate its importance.

To many readers the main interest of these letters will lie in the view they afford of Lord Dalhousie's relations with a trusted subordinate. That he was a man of imperious will, who looked for the same high standard of efficiency and unwavering devotion to duty in his subordinates as he relentlessly imposed upon himself, is well known. Like the late Lord Curzon his capacity for sheer hard work was seemingly inexhaustible, and he demanded equally good service from those who worked with him. But unlike his brilliant successor Lord Dalhousie never had to be adjured to 'try and suffer fools more gladly'.² What strikes one most forcibly in reading his letters is his innate generosity of character. Nowhere is this more strikingly demonstrated than in his relations with General Godwin, to

¹ *I.S.P.*, Cons. 29 Dec. 1852, No. 15.

² Lord Ronaldshay, *Life of Lord Curzon*, ii. 415.

which there are many references in the early part of this correspondence. The degree of forbearance exhibited by Lord Dalhousie in his dealings with the difficult old soldier would be the more remarkable were it not for our knowledge of his far greater forbearance, for a similar reason, in his relations with Sir Charles Napier. And here again a contrast with Lord Curzon is suggested, for never once during his difficulties with Godwin did Lord Dalhousie indulge in unjust satirical references to him; nor ever in his official minutes did he insert a single discourteous sentence—even when denouncing in most forcible terms the views or the actions of the General Commanding the Army of Ava. The most trying episode of all is barely touched on in these letters.¹ It occurred when Godwin in December 1852 received the official document appointing Commodore Lambert, Phayre, and himself joint commissioners for negotiating the treaty of peace with the Burmese Government. In accordance with strict etiquette Lambert's name, as acting Chief of Her Majesty's Naval Forces in the Indian Seas, was mentioned first in order. When his petulant protest against the precedence given to a mere commodore over a Major-General was rejected by Lord Dalhousie, General Godwin sent in an immoderate official remonstrance, of which the concluding paragraph ran:

'Now, sir,² with all deference and respect to the extraordinary decision that Commodore (Captain) Lambert ranking with any Brigadier Generals (Colonels) is my superior Officer and to sign before me in the Treaty, I must be allowed to act, if unfortunately called on, as a General Officer in my position must, to uphold the honour of the Army.'³

'I am unable to understand with certainty what these words are meant to convey,' wrote Lord Dalhousie on reading Godwin's dispatch. 'Reading them in connexion with the context of the dispatch and construing them in accordance with the tone and spirit which pervade it, I can only conclude that Major General Godwin has meant to intimate that he intended to refuse to sign the Treaty. I trust that these words may be found capable of a more favorable interpretation. I am reluctant to believe that any General Officer in Her Majesty's service would permit himself to intimate to the

¹ *Vide* Letter No. 19, postscript.

² He was addressing the Secretary.

³ *I.S.P.*, Cons. 24 Mar. 1853, No. 36.

Government of India that he will deliberately disobey its commands, or that he would risk the evil effects upon the public interests, which such an interruption of negotiation for peace might produce, even if he were prepared to disregard the personal consequences which his act would involve.’¹

A smaller man than Lord Dalhousie, goaded almost to desperation by the hundred and one other difficulties that the General was continuously raising with fatal persistence, might have succumbed to the temptation to recall him. That Lord Dalhousie refrained from taking this step was in the last resort due to his belief that the public interests would not be best served thereby, but it is also obvious from his official minutes that, having regard to the old general’s long years of honourable service to his country, he would do nothing calculated to bring upon him unnecessary pain and undeserved stigma at the close of a distinguished career. And although Godwin created further embarrassments for the civil authorities by arguing against the Government of India’s position at the peace conference with the Burmese Commissioners,² by claiming as war booty for Her Majesty’s forces in Burma all timber described vaguely as ‘found lying in logs’ within the new province,³ and by refusing detachments of troops for the protection of civil officers taking up their duties in unsubdued districts (though he had assured the Government of India that he had ample troops for all purposes save a move upon the Burmese capital),⁴ he was spared even the indignity of an official reprimand. Instead, the Governor-General contented himself with taking adequate measures to circumvent the old man’s waywardness, while at the same time leaving him in no doubt as to his own views on each matter. And beyond sending the correspondence home to the Court of Directors—a necessary safeguard, since military commanders in India had an unpleasant habit of writing home behind the backs of Governors-General—he scrupulously avoided his obvious opportunities for throwing discredit upon General Godwin with the home authorities. This attitude he consistently maintained in his final minute of 29 June 1853

¹ *I.S.P.*, Cons. 24 Mar. 1853, No. 37.

² *Vide* Letters Nos. 26 and 29.

³ *Vide* Letter No. 29, note 1.

⁴ *Vide* Letter No. 30, note 1.

announcing to the Secret Committee the termination of hostilities with Burma.¹

'The name of Major General Godwin C.B.,' he wrote, 'as that of the Commander of the Army, which has again triumphantly asserted our supremacy among the nations of the East, will at once commend itself to the favour of Her Majesty's Government and of the Honble. Court of Directors, who have before them the terms in which the services of the Major General have from time to time been noticed by the Governor General in Council. If on some occasions the Government of India has seen reason to dissent from, or to comment unfavourably upon, the views of the Major General, I trust that the Honble. Committee, now that all has ended well, will pass by those occasions and will have regard only to the records of our satisfaction and praise.'

At the bottom of his heart Dalhousie had a great admiration for the tough old soldier.

The impression one forms of Lord Dalhousie's Governor-Generalship is that like his predecessor, Lord Hastings, he was exceptionally well served. The list of distinguished men who were his subordinates is a surprising one. To mention only a few, the names of Napier, the Lawrences, John Russell Colvin, Thomason, Yule, Durand, Baird Smith, Cautley, R. Strachey, W. W. Greathead, Thomas Oldham, Dr. John Forsyth, Arthur Phayre, and Albert Fytche occur readily to the memory. But although they contributed no mean share towards rendering his period of office one of the greatest in the annals of British Indian history, their achievements in no way dim Lord Dalhousie's glory. Rather do they the more proclaim it, since a lesser man could not so magnificently have handled this magnificent human material. One of his greatest assets was his power to attract men and thus get the best out of them. As the late Sir George Forrest wrote of him in his *Athenaeum* articles already mentioned:² 'Men served him with heart and soul because they knew that their trials and difficulties were the object of his attentive concern and that he would never fail them in the hour of need. In the Punjaub and Burma he chose his instruments with care; he guided them, but he gave them free-

¹ *I.S.P.*, Cons. 29 July 1853, No. 37.

² p. xi.

dom of action; he trusted them and they trusted him, and the beneficent results are stamped on the page of history.'

Sir William Lee Warner has dwelt upon the exceptionally happy relations that existed between Lord Dalhousie and Phayre during the latter's commissionership of Pegu.¹ He points out that only on three occasions were there differences between them, the disputed matters being the question of police establishments, over which Phayre attempted unwisely to economize, the measures for the introduction of the electric telegraph into Pegu, and the Burmese raid over the English border at Thadut Kun² near Myede in March 1855. A study of the correspondence will at once show that the differences between the two men on these matters were far from serious, and in no way interrupted the friendly spirit of their intercourse, or affected the complete trust each reposed in the other. The episode of the Thadut Kun outrage serves especially to illustrate this point and the extraordinary clear-sightedness of Lord Dalhousie in dealing with a matter which might easily have had serious results.

The Burmese Governor of Myede before its annexation by the British was a *myothugyi* [head of a 'myo' or district] named Maung Bo. When the British boundary was pushed up to Myede he made himself, as Governor of Malun, just over the frontier, a terror to the population that had accepted alien rule, driving them from their homes and forcing them out of British territory. During 1854 and the early part of the following year it was estimated that he drove off in this way altogether some two thousand families. 'From the system of terror', wrote Phayre, 'and the savage cruelty with which that plan of policy has ever been pursued under the Burmese Government, a message conveyed by a few armed ruffians is generally sufficient to make hundreds of families among the Peasantry put their household goods and children into their carts, and go at once where ordered or driven.'³

After Phayre's return from Calcutta in December 1854 with the members of the Burmese Mission he proceeded to Myede, where he was joined by Major Grant Allan in a tour of inspec-

¹ *Op. cit.*, ii. 7-13.

² In the official documents it is called Thadoot Koon or Nga Thaway Tay.

³ *I.S.P.*, Cons. 29 June 1855, No. 25.

tion of the frontier. Early in their tour they spent the night at a very friendly Karen village well inside British territory, which had not previously been visited by British officers. As a result of their visit one of Maung Bo's men, a rascal named Shwe Be,¹ descended upon the helpless villagers with a force of armed men and began to drive them off into Burmese territory. Luckily, however, word was got through to the British Military post at Thabulla, eighteen miles away, and a detachment of Irregular Horse rescued the fugitives. On hearing of the raid Phayre was immensely angry, and for once—the only occasion we have noted in the period covered by these letters—completely lost his head. He wrote off to the Government of India suggesting such a course of action² as would have rendered an early resumption of war inevitable. The full madness of such a course we with our after-the-event wisdom can better appreciate than the actors in the drama, who could not be expected to foresee either the Indian Mutiny or the exceptional difficulties later experienced in the pacification of Upper Burma after the march to Mandalay in 1885. When Phayre's letter came before the Governor-General's Council, Dalhousie himself was away in the Nilgiri Hills, and in submitting the matter to him J. P. Grant significantly noted that if the chain of frontier police posts, sanctioned in the previous October, had been established this raid could never have occurred. For that reason he suggested the matter must not be made into a national quarrel. With this Lord Dalhousie was in entire agreement, but in a strikingly clear-sighted minute³ he lifted the discussion to a higher plane—that of frontier policy in general. Phayre's proposals, he said, were 'directly at variance' with the policy which had been pursued in relation to Burma since the close of the war. When the annexation of Pegu was determined upon the Government of India had decided not to advance to the Burmese capital but to take up a defensive position behind the new boundary. As was expected, no treaty was concluded by the Court of Ava, and hence formal relations had not been established between the states. Guerrilla warfare, of the sort represented by this outrage,

¹ Given erroneously as Shwe Bo by Lee Warner (*op. cit.*, ii. 10).

² *Vide* Letter No. 190.

³ Of 24 May 1855. *Vide I.S.P.*, Cons. 29 June 1855, No. 35.

was foreseen, and he himself had urged upon the home authorities that 'half a century of such forays would be infinitely preferable to the occupation of Burmah'.

'The frontier policy, which the Government thus laid down for itself in relation to Burmah, was no new policy. It had already been pursued for some years on the western frontier and for the same reasons. The tribes there upon the border from Bunnoo to Eusofzyae were feudatories of the Ameer of Cabul. We had no relations with the Ameer. The peace and protection of the frontier, therefore, were felt to depend upon themselves. Defensive measures were taken for its security; and when outrages were committed, retribution has been inflicted upon, and reparation has been exacted from the actual authors of the outrage, without any thought of our being involved in war with the power of Cabul.

'Relations of amity have very recently been established between the British Government and that of the Ameer; but it has never been contemplated that we should abandon our former policy, and that we should now hold the Ameer responsible for outrages committed by his feudatories without his sanction and contrary to his will. It is true that the authority of the King of Ava over his subjects on the frontier is more complete than that possessed by the Ameer of Cabul over the hill tribes. But upon one and the same principle, namely, that we should not make every outrage upon the border a cause of quarrel involving risk of war between the states, the Government resolved to take the same course on the Eastern as on the Western frontier. That resolution was approved and has ever since been observed.'

An additional reason for moderation lay, he thought, in the experience they had of the King's former conduct, and in the fact that a recent letter from Spears announced that Maung Bo had been supplanted by Makertich the Armenian, lately one of the Burmese envoys to Calcutta, as Governor of Malun. The Commissioner, therefore, must at once organize the frontier posts and explain his previous disregard of them. And he was to employ no peremptory language in addressing the Court of Ava on the subject of the raid.

In his private letter to Phayre,¹ after emphasizing the general views expressed in his minute, Lord Dalhousie wrote: 'Don't make yourself unhappy about this frontier affair—I don't concur

¹ No. 200.

in your recommendations, and I think you made a mistake about the posts; but there is nothing to worry about.' 'I shall pay every attention to what you may represent officially regarding the frontier posts', he wrote in a later letter.¹ 'I should be very sorry to find I had done you any injustice even temporarily and unintentionally.' Phayre wisely shouldered the blame. On several previous occasions Lord Dalhousie had urged him to be more lavish in his expenditure upon police establishments; and although on this occasion his neglect was more apparent than real, the causes of delay which he set forth in his official report could have been largely overcome had he been sufficiently impressed with the urgency of the matter. He had thought it best, he wrote,² to defer the issue of orders until he had conferred with Major Grant Allan and Captain Ardagh, the deputy commissioner of Prome. He himself had arrived at the frontier much later than he had expected; and there were further delays in getting into touch with Allan, who had to cross from Toungoo. But the chief cause of delay was that only on arrival at Prome did he find that the major portion of the arms for the police corps had not been automatically forwarded from Rangoon, whither they had been sent from Calcutta in August of the previous year.

The stiff little breeze soon blew itself out. Phayre was officially informed that though on reading his explanation the Governor-General was still of opinion that the delay in establishing the police posts was an error of judgement, he had no wish whatever to dwell upon it further.³ In his private letter⁴ Lord Dalhousie wrote: 'I am too sensible from my own experience how easy it is to make mistakes, to allow this one to injure you in my estimation.' The Court of Ava sent a satisfactory reply to Phayre's letter of remonstrance, and through the good offices of Spears the matter was amicably settled.

The incident related above illustrates some of those characteristics of Lord Dalhousie that made him one of the greatest statesmen and leaders of men Great Britain has ever sent to the East. These letters bear witness to others. We see the vivid personality, innately majestic, and in its contact with others a

¹ No. 224.

² *I.S.P.*, Cons. 28 Sept. 1855, No. 10.

³ *Ibid.*, No. 11.

⁴ Letter No. 227.

source of strength and inspiration. Equally impressive is what Sir William Lee Warner calls 'the wonderful range of the Governor-General's activity, knowledge and suggestion'. His grasp of detail is often astounding; but he is never overwhelmed by his own thoroughness. Throughout he keeps his gaze steadily on main objectives, and whether we agree or not with his policy its logic is irresistible. Perhaps to the reader of these letters the most striking of all his qualities will appear to be his unhesitating precision and unerring aim. He always seems to know his own mind; and conveys his decisions or opinions in clear, direct, and forcible terms. And he is usually right.

But Lord Dalhousie was no tyrant, nor Phayre a mere robot. While the direction of policy was of course entirely in the Governor-General's hands, there is nothing in these letters to suggest that he ever unduly curtailed the initiative of his Agent in Pegu, or allowed him insufficient freedom of action. 'I am glad to see you are acting on your full discretionary powers and are considering the propriety of advancing the frontiers to Meeaday,' he writes to Phayre early in 1853.¹ 'You know the subject better than any of us, and I leave it to your judgment to stipulate as you please regarding it.' And it will be seen that he never asserted himself save where his wider view of the situation or Phayre's request for advice justified his action. Here again the Governor-General was strictly logical. Where he trusted his man he gave him all reasonable liberty within his sphere of service. And he trusted Phayre well enough to write soon after his appointment that he was 'the fittest man in India for his work'.² How well Phayre justified that trust Dalhousie's last letter to him—the last of this series—bears eloquent witness:

'And now I must take leave of you. I do it with great regret. It is impossible to conceive any demi-official correspondence more agreeable and satisfactory than yours has been to me. You have performed your public duties with ability, with assiduity and success; and I am grateful to you personally for exertions which have raised my own reputation, while they were of conspicuous value to the State. Farewell.'

¹ p. 18.

² Lee Warner, *op. cit.*, ii. 12.

MODERN SPELLING OF BURMESE PLACE- NAMES MENTIONED IN THE TEXT

<i>In text.</i>	<i>Modern.</i>
Arracan	Arakan
Aeng	An (Pass)
Bamoo }	Bhamo
Bomaw }	
Chalain Mew	Salin Myo (Myo = stockaded town)
Chardruayua	Chantha-ywa (village in Shwebo District)
Chendwen	Chindwin (River)
Donebew (variations of)	Danubyu
Gogy	Go-gyi
Khyouk Phyoo	Kyaukpyu (on Ramri Is.)
Khueen Deen	Chindwin (River)
Kiaintoun }	Kengtung
Kyantoung myo }	
Kyangaen	Kyangin
Kyouk tsay (variations of)	Kyauksè
Maengoon	Mingun
Malon }	Malun
Melloon }	
Maquay	Magwe
Maulmain	Moulmein
Maendoung } (and other variants)	Mindon
Mendoon }	
Meeaday	Myedè
Mendat	Mindat
Menrawa	Minhla-ywa
Monae	Mong-nai (in Southern Shan States)
Moo	Mu
Myeetngay }	Myitngè (River)
Myet guay }	
Myet-tsoung	Myit-saung (River)
Myow pyen gee	Myopyingyi
Namayan	Renamed Allanmyo after British occupation
Nebeck	Nabet (village in Sagaing District)
Oung ben lai	Aungpinlè
Palike	Palaik

Panlang	Panlaung
Pantano(ao)	Pantanaw
Sembew-ghewn	Sinbyu-gyun
Shouy thlan Goon	Shwehlangun
Shouy tsan young	Shwe-san-yaung
Shwe Gyeen	Shwegyin
Shouy Bomyow	Shwebo (myo)
Tabayane	
Tabayeen }	Tabayin
Tabyeen }	
Tapoon (Tappoon)	Tapun
Thebomyow	Thibaw-myo (Hsipaw)
Theret Myow	Thayetmyo
Tsagine	Sagaing
Tsalane	Salin
Tsanyway	San ywa
Tsen gine	Singaing
Tounghoop	Taung-gup (Pass)
Yae-mey-then	Yamèthin
Yaenan	Yenangyaung
Zogy	Zawgyi
Zongy	Zongyi

NOTE. For the etymology of some of the more common place-names in Burma the reader is referred to Murray's *Handbook to India, Burma, and Ceylon*, 13th ed., p. 696.

THE LETTERS

THE LETTERS

I

(1852(?), undated,¹ probably written from Barrackpore)

Govt. House. Monday.

Dear Captain Phayre,

It will give me great pleasure if you would come to Barrackpore on Wednesday evening and remain till Friday when I must return to Calcutta.

Yours very truly,

DALHOUSIE.

¹ Probably written in November 1852. Phayre, who was Commissioner of Arakan, had been ordered up to Calcutta early in November to discuss with the Governor-General the form of Government to be introduced into Pegu after its formal annexation. Late in the same month he returned to Akyab to wind up his commissionership and await orders to proceed to Rangoon.

2

Confidential.

Govt. House. Decr. 8th, 1852.

Dear Captain Phayre,

So very little progress has been made of late towards the termination of hostilities in Burmah, that I am not disposed to make my Proclamation¹ wait any longer upon Genl. Godwin's fight.² Wherefore I have sent 'Zenobia' to take you down with instructions.³ Those instructions are so full, and leave you so sufficient a discretion, that I think it hardly necessary to add anything to them.

It may, however, give you confidence in forming your decision as to the proper date of issue for the Proclamation, to say at once that I don't care how soon you issue it.

Upon the question of the frontiers I can say little. It should not be so near Prome as that any plundering knot of vagabonds may worry the Cantonments—nor should it be too distant.

One point at Rangoon itself is of moment.

The place will certainly gain importance as a port if at all. In

that expectation it is of moment to provide that the river bank should be kept clear and with ample space for wharves docks, godowns &c. &c. Orders to that effect were issued originally. The impression I derived from a very cursory view of the bank, when I was at Rangoon, was that too little space had been reserved. I apprehend that all land there is Government land. Its right should be asserted; and special care should be taken by the local officers to allow no encroachment; nor should any private property on that space be conceded to any one without the previous sanction of the G.G. in C. These remarks apply to the whole of both banks of the river from Kemmendine downwards. Regarding this and docks &c. I am sure the Commodore⁴ will very readily aid you with his opinion.

Send me intimation of your having issued the Proclamation as soon as you have done it—or as soon as you have resolved to do it—telling me the date you have fixed. I will then gazette your officers. I send you two letters presenting you to Genl. Godwin and to Commodore Lambert. They were not necessary, but can do no harm.

I hope to hear from you regularly and confidentially. You will find such correspondence a material aid to you; and I beg you to state your views and wishes to me at all times unreservedly.

Wishing you, and feeling assured of, full success in your mission,

I beg to remain, Sincerely yours
DALHOUSIE.

¹ THE PROCLAMATION OF THE ANNEXATION OF PEGU. (*I.S.P.*, Cons. of 28 Jan. 1853, Nos. 2 and 3.)

A. *Notification* dated 29 December 1852. The Most Noble the Governor-General in Council is pleased to direct that the following Proclamation, whereby the Province of Pegu has been declared to be a portion of the British territories in the East, shall be published for general information.

His Lordship in Council directs that in honour of this event a Royal Salute shall be fired at every principal station of the Army in the several Residencies of India.

DALHOUSIE, 29 December 1852.

B. *Proclamation*. The Court of Ava having refused to make amends for the injuries and insults which British subjects had suffered at the hands of its servants, the Governor-General of India in Council resolved to exact reparation by force of arms.

The Forts and Cities upon the Coast were forthwith attacked and captured: the Burman forces have been dispersed wherever they have been met; and the Province of Pegu is now in the occupation of British troops.

The just and moderate demands of the Government of India have been rejected by the King. The ample opportunity that has been offered him for repairing the injury that was done, has been disregarded and the timely submission which alone could have been effectual to prevent the dismemberment of his Kingdom, is still withheld.

Wherefore in compensation for the past and for better serenity [*sic*] in the future, the Governor-General in Council has resolved, and hereby proclaims, that the Province of Pegu is now, and shall be henceforth, a portion of the British Territories in the East.

Such Burman troops as may still remain within the province shall be driven out. Civil Government shall immediately be established and officers shall be appointed to administer the affairs of the several districts.

The Governor-General in Council hereby calls on the inhabitants of Pegu to submit themselves to the authority, and to confide securely in the protection of the British Government, whose power they have seen to be irresistible and whose rule is marked by justice and beneficence.

The Governor-General in Council having exacted the reparation he deems sufficient, desires no further conquest in Burmah, and is willing to consent that hostilities should cease.

But if the King of Ava shall fail to renew his former relations of friendship with the British Government, and if he shall recklessly seek to dispute its quiet possession of the Province it has now declared to be its own, the Governor-General in Council will again put forth the power he holds and will visit with full retribution, aggressions which, if they be persisted in, must of necessity lead to the total subversion of the Burman State, and to the ruin and exile of the King and his race. By order etc.

C. ALLEN, *Offg. Sec. to the Govt. of India.*

20 Dec. 1852.

² Major-General Godwin with 2,300 forces accompanied by the necessary transports had occupied Prome on 10 October 1852, defeating General 'Bandula', who surrendered himself on 15 October. Receiving information of the presence of a strong Burmese force, said to number 18,000 men, about 10 miles away, he ordered that they should not be disturbed until reinforcements could be got up from Rangoon. In the meantime he directed his attention to the capture of the city of Pegu, which had been re-occupied by the Burmese. Operations in this neighbourhood were not brought to a successful conclusion until 14 December largely owing to the great difficulties of land transport. Meanwhile Lord Dalhousie, after receiving news of the capture

of Prome, was anxious to proclaim the annexation of the province so soon as Godwin should announce that its occupation had reached a sufficiently satisfactory stage for such a step. But after the General's dispatch of 12 October two successive mails arrived in Calcutta from Rangoon without any official communication from him, and from other sources Dalhousie received information that the Burmese force at Yathemyo near Prome was contemptibly small and weak. When this letter was written he had no idea of the difficulties attending Godwin's operations around the city of Pegu. Later on, in January of the new year, when a feeble Burmese attack upon Brigadier-General Sir John Cheape at Prome disclosed the true state of the enemy's forces there, and their position was discovered to be almost deserted, the vials of the Governor-General's official wrath were outpoured upon General Godwin. 'I am at all times reluctant that the Government should interfere with the operations of a General commanding an army in the field unless under circumstances of urgent necessity', he told his Council (*I.S.P.*, Cons. 28 Jan. 1853, No. 35). But he directed that Godwin should be informed that 'while acknowledging the exertions of Brigadier-General Sir John Cheape and those under his command, the Governor-General in Council cannot withhold an expression of the regret and disappointment . . . that a considerable British force has for nearly three months been kept inactive within five or six miles of only 5,000 or 6,000 Burmese troops, who even placed them on the defensive and ultimately retired untouched. This inaction under such circumstances cannot have failed to exercise the injurious influence upon public interests which the Governor-General in Council has on previous occasions expressed his anxiety to avert.'

Sir Henry Thomas Godwin (1784-1853) had entered the army as an ensign in the 9th Foot in 1799. He served as a captain throughout the Peninsular War, being severely wounded at Barossa. He was made brevet-major and C.B. for his war services. Later as Lt.-col. of the 41st Foot he fought throughout the First Burmese War (1824-6), being present in almost every engagement. In 1846 he was promoted to Major-General and four years later became a divisional commander in Bengal, in which capacity he was appointed as commander-in-chief of the Burmese Expeditionary Force in 1852. (*D.N.B.*)

³ The official letter containing Phayre's instructions is given in *I.S.P.*, Cons. 29 Dec. 1852, No. 17. He was to be allowed a salute of 9 guns within his jurisdiction. As soon as possible after his arrival at Rangoon he was to proceed to Prome (1) to find some way of dispatching a letter from the Governor-General to the King of Burma, (2) to fix the new boundary, and (3) to form as quickly as possible his views regarding arrangements for the protection of the frontier. In setting up the civil administration of the new province Phayre was to carry out the suggestions made in his memorandum on this subject, annexed to the instructions. Early and special provision was to be made for the safe custody and management of the teak forests in the province, and a

supplementary proclamation against dacoity was to be issued, threatening punishment of death to all found in arms after a certain date, and calling upon villagers to aid the British in capturing dacoits.

⁴ Commodore Lambert, the Officiating Naval Commander-in-Chief after the death of Rear-Admiral Austen at Prome.

3

Rangoon, Decr. 25th, 1852.

My Lord,

I received your Lordship's letter of the 8th instant by Zenobia, and beg to avail myself of your kind permission to write upon subjects connected with the administration of affairs in Pegu.

I arrived here on Sunday the 19th. I was received with much kindness by Commodore Lambert. His Excellency was of opinion that the immediate issue of the Proclamation of annexation was very desirable; that it would have a considerable effect in tranquilizing the country, by giving encouragement to our friends, and fixing to us those who have hitherto wavered between the former and the present Government. I thought there was much reason in this, and I therefore determined to issue the Proclamation at once. This was done with due formality on the 20th inst. On the 22d General Godwin arrived from Pegu, and I immediately waited on him. Your Lordship's dispatches for him had been sent before. The General received me very kindly.

My first act after landing was to set about inquiries relative to the laying out of the town of Rangoon. Lieut. A. Frazer¹ of the Bengal Engineers has a plan which appears a very excellent one. It provides for *bunding* out the river water, which now occasionally rises over the western part of the town at the King's Wharf (now Godwin's Wharf), and carrying a strand road 150 (or more) feet broad from that point direct east, as far as the present Govt. Naval yard—or as far as it may be found advisable to extend the town in that direction. A road one hundred feet broad will also run from Godwin's Wharf direct north to the Great Pagoda. It is proposed then to lay out the town of Rangoon with reference to the lines of these two roads, which will run at right angles. At intervals of about 750 feet there will be roads of 100 feet broad, running from the strand road north, and intersected

by roads of similar width running east and west. The intervening spaces between these main roads will be divided by three roads of 30 feet width each. A trench or canal will be cut from the river, commencing at the present eastern extremity of the town, where the Government docks now are, and it will be continued in a northern and western direction, passing between the town and the stockade, and be carried down to the river again beyond Godwin's Wharf. By this canal water will be admitted at high tide, and be retained by sluice gates. Arched masonry sewers will be run up the streets leading north direct from the river to this canal, and into these sewers the filth of the town will be conducted. The water of the canal retained at the upper part of the town, will, whenever required, be let off through the sewers, and so, it is hoped, the town be preserved clean and healthy.

It is desirable that an early settlement should be made of the terms upon which building lots should be disposed of. People are naturally anxious to make arrangements for housing themselves before the monsoon. It is proposed that no single building lot within the limits of the town, should exceed 10,000 square feet, and the great majority will be much smaller than that. The object of this is to give everyone a fair chance of being able to purchase from the Govt. direct.

I have issued a notice regarding land within the town and the vicinity, of which I beg to enclose a copy, and I trust it will meet with your Lordship's approval. The people now in occupation of land have only been permitted to hut themselves under the General's orders, on the understanding that they have not thereby acquired any claim to the land at all. Some, no doubt, are on land which formerly belonged to them; but as all were turned out before Rangoon was occupied by us, I certainly think that the best plan now is to view the whole space of Rangoon &c. as vacant land, and proceed to distribute it to settlers. Beyond the limits of the town, both east and west, as well as on the Dalla side, the whole river bank will be reserved for dock and timber yards; and as directed by your Lordship, no grant will be made there without the sanction of the Governor General in Council. Regarding the mode in which the town lots for building purposes are to be disposed of, I beg to recommend that they be put up to

public auction at an upset price of one anna per square foot in the most favourable sites, and proportionally less on other sites; though I am not yet prepared to say distinctly what exact rates should be fixed for each of the town divisions. This, however, I trust to have settled before many days. As to the terms and tenure on which the land is to be held, I should respectfully recommend that the purchaser be declared to be the owner, the land, whether built on or not, being subject to an annual assessment to be fixed from time to time, as the Govt. may see fit. Land occupied as a timber yard or compound would pay a different rate to a building lot. But purchasers of building lots should be required to build within a given time, and for the purpose of guarding against fire, all houses should be covered with tiled roofs. I think it advisable that the disposal of town building lots should not be delayed beyond the 1st Feby. next. A large space will be reserved for all the Government offices, and the whole of the high land south of the stockade will be kept clear. Lands in the vicinity of the town, required for bungalows, compounds &c., might be disposed of on terms similar to those for building lots within the town, but at a lower rate; probably one anna the square yard. I shall hope to be able to have the services of Lieut. A. Frazer for the purpose of carrying out these plans. The expense will be considerable, but I have no doubt will meet it. Lieut. Frazer will require an establishment, which, if approved, I will submit hereafter.

Custom House rules are now being drawn up, and will come into operation at once. The Port dues, four annas a ton, I propose to continue at present. The Commodore is of opinion that instead of a Light House on Elephant Point it will be better to have a floating light about five or more miles to the southward.² A floating light is very expensive, but nearly everyone who knows the Port appears to be of the same opinion. I shall continue to give attention to this important point.

Regarding Banditti I have not yet issued the Proclamation directed by your Lordship, but purpose doing so before I leave Rangoon. There are, as far as I can learn, two principal 'Robber Chiefs', as they are styled by the people in the vicinity of Rangoon: one named Myat Htoon to the north about Lyne, and one Shwe-bau to the westward about 20 miles. They both plunder

the people, and keep the village women and children shut up as 'security' for the men. A Karen chief named Myat Yay has armed his followers against the latter, and sent in an application for a steamer to help him in cutting off the Robber's retreat. This could not be given; but the Commodore has kindly sent his boats on the service, and they started last night. This morning I received an application from the Karen Myat Yay for arms and ammunition. Unfortunately I cannot give them to him. Everyone speaks well of this man. Captain Latter³ knows him, and says he is trustworthy—the missionaries⁴ also—and had I 100 muskets available, I would lend them to him at once. If I could be furnished with 500 *flint* muskets, 2000 flints and 20 to 30,000 rounds of ball cartridges, I feel assured I could distribute them to advantage, chiefly among the Karens.⁵ Everyone speaks in high terms of the assistance these people everywhere afford our troops. The land column, which went to Pegu under Colonel Sturt, was supplied with coolies, carts, &c. by the Karens most readily—and they assisted to cut the road, and had parties on the flanks of the troops as scouts.

The General spoke to me of its being desirable to have one or more local corps in Pegu which I also think will be advisable. Your Lordship also formerly mentioned the subject, and, if I may be permitted to say so, I think Captain Nuthall, who I have long known, will be an excellent officer to raise a regiment of the kind. I believe Commodore Lambert's son, who belongs to the 56th Regt. N.I., would be willing to serve under Captain Nuthall as second in command.

The General will leave this by Proserpine for Prome on Tuesday the 28th, and I purpose accompanying him, and laying down with the General the line of boundary which shall be found most suitable. It probably may take some time to decide this important point. The Commodore says he will come up as soon as he hears from me that his presence is required.

I trust this letter will not have been too tedious, but I shall continue to write of everything which I consider worthy of your Lordship's notice. I am,

My Lord, with much respect
your obedient servant

A. P. PHAYRE.

Notice

is hereby given that the whole of the land occupied by the town of Rangoon, together with the adjoining suburbs and vacant land, as also both banks of the River extending from the mouth of the Panlan Creek to the mouth of the Pegu river is owned by the Government. No buildings now existing or which may hereafter be built without sanction from the authorities will be considered to entitle the occupants to property in the soil they cover. Arrangements are now making for an immediate survey of the town and adjoining country with the view of a regular plan of the town being laid out. When this is completed the manner in which it is proposed to dispose of building lots will be publicly notified. In the meantime all persons are hereby informed that no buildings should be erected without permission from the Magistrate—and that due public notice will be given before building lots are disposed of.

By order of the Commissioner and Governor-
General's Agent in Pegu.

¹ Now commemorated by Frazer Street, Rangoon.

² *Vide* Letter No. 22, note 1.

³ Captain Thomas Latter of the 67th Native Infantry, Bengal Army, an expert in the Burmese and Talaing languages and author of *A Grammar of the Language of Burmah* (Calcutta and London, 1845), was interpreter to General Godwin during the Second Burmese War, wherein he earned a great reputation for bravery. Laurie (*Our Burmese Wars*, p. 158) calls him 'our Chevalier Bayard'. He was mentioned with high praise in the Governor-General's Minute of 29 June 1853 announcing to the Secret Committee the termination of hostilities. As Deputy-Commissioner of Prome, when civil government was set up in the new province, one of his tasks was that of procuring intelligence of events at the Burmese Court. But his extraordinary credulity of alarmist rumours, which were proved to be absolutely baseless, aroused the 'deep disgust' of Lord Dalhousie, who threatened in September 1853 to remove Latter from his post. But on 8 December of that year he was discovered dead in his bed at Prome, assassinated from some private motive never discovered. His assassin escaped, though there were two sentries within 20 yards of the scene of the crime. Latter Street in Rangoon perpetuates his name, as in several other cases of officers connected with Burma at this period—cf. Godwin Road, Frazer Street, Cheape Road, Fytche Road and Square, Payre Street.

⁴ The Missionaries, i.e. of the American Baptist Mission, which

since the days of the intrepid Judson, its pioneer in Burma, had made great progress among the Karens. In his official letter on this subject Phayre mentions two American missionaries, Messrs. Kincaid and Vinton, as accompanying this Karen deputation (*I.S.P.*, Cons. 28 Jan. 1853, No. 70).

⁵ The Karens. The best short description of the various races of Burma is to be found in Sir J. G. Scott's revised edition of his *Burma, A Handbook of Practical Information*. For the Karens vide also D. M. Smeaton's *The Loyal Karens of Burma* (London, 1887).

4

Private. Govt. House. Decr. 30th, 1852.

My dear Phayre,

I have just received and beg to thank you for your letter of 25th instant.

I am glad to learn you have issued the proclamation at once. 'Phlegithon' goes immediately; and I only write now to say that I have ordered 1000 flint muskets—4000 flints and 50,000 rounds to be sent to the Rangoon magazine *to meet your indent*. These, or as many as can be got ready, will go by 'Phlegithon'.

The rest by Tenasserim will start on 4th when I will write again: I have complied with your several requests made through Allen.¹

Yours in haste very truly,
DALHOUSIE.

¹ The Offg. Secretary to the Government of India in the Foreign Department.

5

Private. Govt. House. January 1st, 1853.

My dear Phayre,

Two days ago I wrote a few lines regarding your muskets. Report was made to me that they were alongside Phlegithon yesterday afternoon, and I hope they have sailed this morning.

The plan you describe for the laying out of the City of Rangoon appears to be a very good one; but rather costly and extensive

for *immediate* execution. It will, however, be quite right to lay out the town from the first with reference to the full adoption of this plan ultimately.

With regard to the proposed mode of disposing of building lots, I shall be ready to adopt your suggestions. If parties clearly had property before within what are to be the limits of the town, it may be well to give them lots equal to what they had, tho' not on the same spots. This is said, however, only for your consideration.

Our local corps can be made at once available by taking over the local Arracan battalion; and, if they are wanted, they might very conveniently escort the elephants over.¹ I agree with you that Capt. Nuthall would be a very fit person to raise a new local corps.

The accounts lately received from Prome render it very doubtful whether that place will be a healthy and eligible site for a large station. You will best be able to judge of that.

Believe me to be, Yours very truly,
DALHOUSIE.

¹ One hundred and fifty elephants had been ordered from Bengal for artillery transport in Burma. They were to proceed overland from Arakan to Prome via the Taungup Pass over the Arakan Yoma.

6

Private. Govt. House. January 3, 1853.

My dear Phayre,

In previous letters I have remarked with reference to the boundary, that it should not be drawn too close to Prome, nor too far from it.

Latterly Prome has proved apparently very unhealthy. Whether this is traceable to local causes or not, I cannot tell; but it may be so, and the situation may thus be proved undesirable for troops or a civil station.

Moreover I have lately heard say that the Burmese regard the northern boundary of Pegu as the line from Meeaday to Toun-goo, on which, it is said, there is a good road.

With reference to these questions I am anxious to relieve you

from any embarrassment, which the incidental remark, I quoted above, might cause you. I wish to leave the suggestion of the Boundary to the discretion of the Commissioners, unfettered with any remarks whatever.

Yours sincerely,
DALHOUSIE.

7

Prome, Jany. 8th, 1853.

My Lord,

I arrived here yesterday and found, as I had indeed heard on my way up the river, that the Burmese forces had evacuated Yathé Myo, consequent on an outbreak in Ava.¹ The first point that requires my attention here is to find means for conveying to Ava your Lordship's letter to the King, when I am assured that there is reason to believe it will reach him. At present I think that the letter can be sent with the least chance of being suppressed, through the late Dalla Woon,² who is believed to be at Myaday or its vicinity. He has lately addressed Commodore Lambert, hinting at a desire to accommodate matters, and intimating, though not expressly asserting, that he was empowered by the Burmese Government to negotiate. I shall endeavour to communicate with him, with a view to forwarding the letter by his means. I find that it would not be safe even for a Phoongee³ to be dispatched to Ava on such a mission. He would probably be looked on as a spy in the garb of a priest, and be treated accordingly. Since my arrival here I have seen *Bundoola*⁴ once and had some conversation with him. I think he will be of service, but as yet I have not had time to extract any information from him. He appears good humoured and not very bright. Captain Loch of H.M.S. Winchester, who is here, informed me that Bundoolah as he is called, (his name is Mounge Gyee) has now no means of support, and I propose should your Lordship approve to make him a small allowance, say 50 to 60 Rs a month as a temporary measure. Regarding the boundary I find there is no reliable information. I shall propose to General Godwin to send a reconnoitering party as soon as possible towards Yathé Myo, and eventually towards Myaday also. But the teak

forests towards Toungoo which must be included in our boundary will require great care, lest we should leave the best of them outside. The greater part of the country between this and Rangoon is still shut against us—and should the proclamation, and the late events at Ava, not cause the Banditti to disperse, I feel convinced that some land columns must march through the several districts, and release the people from the state of bondage they are kept in. Very small columns, that is from three to four hundred men each, will suffice. Cavalry would be very useful in such cases, and the number now available is not, I think, sufficient for the service required.

In connection with this subject, I beg to bring to your Lordship's notice the advisability of raising a local corps as soon as possible. General Godwin is of opinion that it should not be expected to be drilled in the minutiae of discipline, but be able to march, and know the use of their arms well; and to be expected, for instance, to act as boat men in transporting themselves from place to place. I think this plan is very desirable. I have heard it remarked regarding the Proclamation, that the term 'Province of Pegu' is applicable only to the country south of Akouk toun, a place some 25 miles below Prome—or rather to the country south of a point a little below Akouk toun. It has been suggested that the term 'Province of Pegu' will therefore be interpreted by the people to mean the tract of country within the limits above mentioned. I only mention this subject, as your Lordship might hear the remark, and conclude I had not attended to it. I will take care, however, that what the Proclamation means by the Province of Pegu, shall be sufficiently understood by the inhabitants of the country, which we may include within our boundary, and I do not think that any inconvenience will be felt from the restricted sense in which the term 'Province of Pegu' was anciently understood.

As regards the station of Captain J. Smith, who will be in charge of the Sarawah district, I purpose placing him for the present at Henzada, which is a place of more importance than Sarawah. There is stationed there a company of H.M. 51st Regt. and two companies of the 40th Regt. N.I. There are few or no inhabitants at Sarawah now.

Prome, I regret to say, still continues unhealthy. I hope soon

to be able to devise a plan, with the help of Major Fraser,⁵ for laying out and draining the town. I am,

My Lord, with much respect
your obedient servant,

A. P. PHAYRE.

¹ The rebellion of the Mindon Prince and his younger brother are here referred to (*vide* Introd., pp. xxxvii-xxxviii). The royal army under Maung Gale, the Lamaing Wun, or Superintendent of the Royal Rice Fields, had been defeated outside the walls of Amarapoora on 31 December and on the following day the city fell and Pagan Min was deposed (Yule, *op. cit.*, *sup.*, pp. 230-2, gives a concise account of the revolution).

The word 'Ava' is used in these letters in a somewhat misleading way. It usually refers to the territory still under Burmese rule. This was the traditional use of the word by Europeans from the fifteenth century onwards. It arose from the fact that in that period the city of Ava was regarded as the capital of Upper Burma. But the word is sometimes used by Dalhousie and Phayre to denote the capital city of Burma, which at that time was Amarapoora, a short way farther up the east bank of the river Irawaddy, and founded by King Bodawpaya (1782-1819), fourth son of the great Alaungpaya, who transferred the seat of government to it from Ava in 1783. For a description of Amarapoora *vide* Yule, *op. cit.*, *sup.*, chap. v, *The City of Amarapoora*.

² The Dalla Wun, i.e. the Governor of the Burmese district of Dalla at the mouth of the Rangoon River. He afterwards became Nan-ina-daw Wun, or Governor of the Queen's Palace. Yule calls him 'a respectable and well-meaning old man'.

³ A Buddhist monk.

⁴ 'Bandula', when recalled in disgrace after his defeat near Prome in July 1852, had been ordered to present himself in woman's clothing before Pagan Min. Expecting a terrible death he preferred to surrender to Sir John Cheape.

⁵ Major Hugh Fraser. Not to be confused with Lieut. A. Fraser, whose scheme for laying out the town of Rangoon is described in Letter No. 3. Major Fraser, also of the Bengal Engineers, was Commanding Engineer with the Burma Expeditionary Force. For his services in the war he was promoted to be Lieut.-Colonel.

8

Prome, Jany. 20th, 1853.

My Lord,

I leave this place for Meeaday with a land column, which marches tomorrow morning. General Godwin will follow in the Nerbudda Steamer, on, I believe, the 23rd inst. On the

route I hope to be able to collect further information regarding the proper boundary line. At present I think that, as a good road runs from Meeaday to Toungoo, and as, in order to include a good line of teak forest, it will be necessary to carry the boundary, at the point where it will meet the Sitang river, to about fifty miles north of Toungoo, that we should go as far as Meeaday on the Irrawaddy. Since I arrived here on the 7th inst. there has been a considerable change as regards the people of the country, who have come in in great numbers. I hear reports also from the country down as far as Sarawah, that the Burmese Officials, who until now have held their own in the districts, are beginning to move off. As the Proclamation becomes gradually known, I have no doubt but that they will cease to make any opposition. I am taking up 'Bandoolah' with me to Meeaday, where he will be useful in case any communication should come from Ava. He appears very willing to be of service and I hope your Lordship will sanction an allowance to him of about 50 Rs. a month, as he is utterly without means of support. General Godwin had promised him some clothes; I therefore presented 50 Rs. to him for that purpose.

You will see, My Lord, from my official letter, the information I have regarding the present state of parties in Ava,¹ and how necessary it is that I should be cautious to whom I entrust the letter for the King of Ava. I do not propose sending it, until I shall see strong reason for believing that it will really be carried to the King's palace.

I cannot anticipate what length of time I may remain at Meeaday. I was chiefly anxious to move there early, in order that we might be in a position to make further inquiry regarding the boundary, and also be on the spot to maintain our right, if it should be found advisable to go so far. I believe General Godwin holds the same general views regarding the proposed boundary, that I do.

We have news of the arrival of the elephants at the Toungoo Pass, (marked in the map Thong-hoo). They will enable General Godwin to send a few land columns through the country, which will be very beneficial.

On the way up to Meeaday I shall look out for a proper site for a cantonment. A high plain on the bank of the river, well

raised above the line of inundation, is what is required. The troops are now very much healthier here than they were, and must at all events remain for this year, since the same amount of shelter could not be found elsewhere. But measures are being taken by Major Fraser to drain the place, and I have, with his assistance, adopted a plan for the town, which Captain Latter is now laying out. I am,

My Lord, your very obedient servant,

A. P. PHAYRE.

¹ In his official letter Phayre states that he has no authentic intelligence of events at Ava. He has heard that the King is mad, and that the rebellion of Mindon is directed against the King's favourite, Maung Bwa, whom the prince accuses of having unnecessarily brought on war with the English. He has therefore sent a message to the Dalla Wun announcing that he is in possession of a letter from the Governor-General to the King, and will deliver it to any officer of proper rank duly accredited (*I.S.P.*, Cons. 16 Feb. 1853, No. 10).

9

Private. Govt. House, February 1, 1853.

My dear Phayre,

This morning I had the pleasure of receiving your letter of 20 ultimo.

Matters at Ava are not moving very fast but still, I think, they are moving in the right direction for us. I am glad to see you are acting on your full discretionary powers and are considering the propriety of advancing the frontiers to Meeaday. With respect to the line on the other side many urge including the Aeng Pass. To do so by extending our *plain* boundary to the Northward of the Pass would carry us too far. But it might be of advantage for us to hold the *whole* pass, without holding the plain beyond it. If so it could be specified in the treaty. You know the subject better than any of us, and I leave to your judgment to stipulate as you please regarding it. You can so inform the other Commissioners, if you think necessary.

In the meantime Capt. Nuthall has done a very dashing thing with his Muggs by capturing the Stockade in the Pass off-hand.¹ I will certainly give him the command of any local regiment you

may wish to raise. Your letter did not make it clear whether they were to be Muggs or Karens or what. An amphibious corps, such as you describe, armed with good carbines or light fusils, would move about very sharp. The Red Karens² have sent in a mission with very friendly professions, which I believe are sincere. If hostilities were over, I could give you the Arracan battalion for frontier work, till you could raise the other.

Yours very truly,

DALHOUSIE.

¹ On the 6th of January Captain Nuthall with the Arakan Battalion captured a very strongly fortified Burmese stockade at Naraghain in the An Pass, one of the two passes across the Arakan Yoma, through which communication was possible between Lower Burma and Arakan. For this daring act, carried out by Nuthall on his own responsibility, he received the thanks of the Governor-General in Council (*I.S.P.*, Cons. 16 Feb. 1853, No. 24). For a graphic description of the exploit by Dalhousie in a private letter, *vide* Baird, *op. cit.*, pp. 243-4.

² The Red Karens. The inhabitants of Karenni in the valley of the Salween.

9a

[The following official dispatch from Phayre to the Government of India, dated Myede the 28th of January 1853, is given here in full in order to fill in a gap in the demi-official correspondence due to Phayre's inability to write personally to Lord Dalhousie on that date (*vide* Letter No. 12). It is the dispatch referred to by Lord Dalhousie at the beginning of Letter No. 11.]

Sir,

I have the honour to report for the information of the Most Noble the Governor General of India in Council, that yesterday about half past ten o'clock A.M. two Burmese gilt boats were observed pulling down the 'Irawaddy' towards the steamer 'Nerbudda' which was at anchor opposite to Meeaday.

On approaching it appeared that two Europeans were on board one of the Boats, who were recognised from their long dark dresses to be Catholic Priests. They were received on board the Steamer by General Godwin and stated that they were the bearers of a letter from the King of Ava. General Godwin sent me word of this occurrence, and I immediately repaired on board.

On arriving there I found that the Priests were Italian Missionaries

namely Father Domingo,¹ who at the commencement of the present war had been sent up a prisoner from Bassein, and Father Paul Abbona,² who had been residing for some time past at Ameerapoor. They delivered the letter of which they were the bearers, and there were with them two persons described as the Kulawoon or Minister Superintending Foreigners and the Amyouk-Woon, or Lord of the Guns. The latter persons were not allowed to come on board the Steamer. The first mentioned of these proved to be an Armenian named Macatis and the last a person of half Portuguese descent named Wargus; both were dressed as Burmans.

I opened the letter in the presence of General Godwin, and I beg to submit a translation of its contents in the document marked A. The account of affairs derived by verbal communication with the Missionaries was as follows: The Mengdoon Prince (whom they always spoke of as King) being opposed to the war with the English had incurred the suspicion and dislike of the King and his favorite Maung Bwa. From this cause aggravated by some private quarrel with the latter, he left the Capital, established himself at the City of Shwe-Bo or Moutsho-bo myo fifty miles North West from Ameerapoor, and assembled his followers and adherents. The actual state of affairs when the Missionaries left Ameerapoor on the 23rd instant was represented by them to be that the Mengdoon Prince, who still remained at Shwe Bo, was Master of the whole country, except the fort, which surrounds the Palace of Ameerapoor. About six or seven thousand men, the Troops of the Meng Doon Prince, surrounded the palace Fort, which still held out. Several officers of rank and influence had joined the Mengdoon Prince and by the assistance of Moug Cho-kak, who lately held a command at Ya-the-Myo near Prome, the late Viceroy, Moug Shwe-kyee, for some time resident at Meeaday, had been taken prisoner and sent in chains to the Prince.

No certain intelligence has been received of the Army of Moug-Kyouk Lon at Shwe-geen, but it was believed to be held in check by adherents of the Meng-Doon Prince, and he has allowed the foreign residents full liberty, whereas up to within a few days of the departure of the Priests, all Foreigners had been kept in strict confinement.

On considering with General Godwin the whole of the circumstances connected with affairs in Burmah, the strong probability which existed that the Meng Doon Prince was in a Commanding position and supported by many persons of influence; the evidence we have of some very general commotion at the seat of Government by the abandonment of the works at Ya-the-Myo and Meeaday without a struggle, and the probability which seemed to exist that

the Meng Doon prince might succeed in his attempt at gaining Supreme Power, decided us to receive and acknowledge the letter, though to abstain from any remarks, but such as were calculated to forward the objects of our Government in securing, if possible, from the de facto rulers of Ava the peaceful recognition of our occupation of the country annexed to the British dominions.

The Mengdoon Prince, in the letter professing to be written by his authority, though using high sounding titles, has [not] assumed the royal state of the Kings of Burmah; we considered it proper in the reply to mention the Prince in the same terms, which had been used regarding him in the letter in question. We therefore sent the answer, of which a copy marked B is herewith enclosed. I trust this will meet with the approval of the Most Noble the G. G. of India in C.

In our intercourse with the Italian Missionaries it was evident that they were strongly in favour of the Mengdoon Prince, and therefore it is probable somewhat exaggerated the strength of his position, and the number of his adherents; still, after making due allowance for this circumstance, it appears certain that the Prince is likely to succeed in his attempt on the throne. He is popular and the King, besides being subject to fits of insanity, is believed to be under the entire influence of an unworthy favorite. The Army of the King's brother-in-law, Mounng Kyouk Lon, at or about Shwegeen is however still unaccounted for in the reports now brought to us, and this shows some probability that that force is believed to be adverse to the Prince. They number about ten thousand men, and, if they are brought to the Capital, may probably turn the scale in favour of the King. In the meantime our duty is to tranquillize the country annexed; to clear it of parties of the enemy; to call back the people to their village to pursue their ordinary avocations; and to watch the course of events at Ameerapoor.

The letter from the Most Noble the G. G. of India addressed to the King of Ava, which I now hold, I shall keep until I see a suitable opportunity for forwarding it to the Personage, for whom it was intended. In the event of that Sovereign being deposed, I request the orders of Government regarding what it is to be done with the letter in question.

A. 'To be given to the English General and the Ayebaing or Commissioner.'

'The Ministers and Generals who preside over the affairs and always receive the august command of the most excellent and powerful Lord of Life, the Meng-tara-Gyee Phra, inform the English

General of India that our excellent and Powerful Lord of Life wishing to save from evil the creatures which the beneficent God has created that they may enjoy peace and happiness, and according to his own royal desire in the time even of his royal elder brother always said it was not proper to make war, and forbade to do so. But the King, his Ministers and Nobles would not hearken, and the people of the two countries not being saved from evil and suffering, the people likewise not being well disposed towards, but dissatisfied with, the royal elder brother and his Ministers and Nobles, set them aside, on assuming the royal duties, taking over and holding the country, the Umbrella and the Palace, agreeably to the former friendship for the English rulers in India (he) wishes for the like friendship: The business of taking and governing the country, the Umbrella and Palace is exceedingly onerous, varied and extensive, and therefore persons of rank are not now sent.

The Catholic Phoongyee Don Abbona, the Catholic Phoongyee Don Domingo, the Kula Woon Maha Meng Khoung Thee-ha-thoo; the Amyouk Woon (Lord of the Guns) Meng hla Thi-ri-Meng teng are sent to the place where the English General of India is—The English Generals are hereby informed.'

A. P. PHAYRE.

B. 'The English General and Commissioner and Agent to the Governor General in Pegu informs the Ministers and Generals, who preside over the affairs of the most Excellent and Powerful Lord of Life, that they are glad the Meng tara Gyee Phra desires to have rest and peace, which they also wish for, but they can only treat with those, who may possess and have due authority over the country, the Umbrella and the Palace, with whom the former friendship can be renewed, and a treaty made, on Burmese Ministers of a suitable rank being deputed to Prome for that purpose. The country, which the British Troops hold and its dependencies, the Ministers and Generals are doubtless aware, has been annexed to the British territory in the East by Proclamation of the Governor General of India in Council. This has been the result of a War forced by the Burmese Government upon the British. It is expected therefore that the Ministers and Generals, who preside over the affairs of the Most Excellent and Powerful Lord of Life, will use their influence to prevent Burmese subjects from disturbing the peace of that Country, the people of which have now become British subjects. A copy of the Proclamation of the Most Noble the G. G. in C. is herewith sent for information.

A. P. PHAYRE.

¹ Father Domingo Tarolly, a secular priest, a Tyrolese by birth,

came to Burma in 1830, and soon afterwards was placed in sole charge of the northern portion of the Catholic Burmese Mission. Later in an effort to convert the Karens he erected churches at Bassein (1840) and Myaungmya (1846) which were destroyed by the Burmese in the war of 1852. After his arrest he was allowed to reside freely at Amarapoora with his brother missionaries. In 1853 he returned to Myaungmya and rebuilt his church. As late as 1878-9 he assisted Father Kern to build a boys' school there. He died at Bassein in 1884 at the advanced age of 84, and is revered as the founder of the Catholic Mission to the Karens in the Delta (*vide An Outline of the History of the Catholic Burmese Mission, 1720-1887*, by Bishop Bigandet).

² Father Paulo Abbona—his name is often wrongly given as Abbano. Lee Warner (*Life of Dalhousie*, ii. 25) wrongly calls him an Armenian priest. In 1840 the Catholic Mission in Burma was made over to the Society of Oblates in Turin. Among the first priests sent out by this Society was Paulo Abbona, an Italian, who arrived in Burma in 1846. He was appointed to take charge of the Christian congregation at Amarapoora. During the Second Burmese War his house was plundered and he was repeatedly threatened with death. But when Mindon Min deposed Pagan Min, he was accorded royal favour and protection. (Bigandet, *op. cit.*, *supra*.)

IO

Yandon, Jany. 29th, 1853.

My Lord,

I am now proceeding up the river to Prome in company with Sir John Cheape and a detachment of the 65th Regt.

The accounts from Tharawaddee since I last wrote are good. Goung Gyee has escaped to the hills but the country is settling down. I purpose making a road at once from Yaygheng to Tappoon—that is, if I find Yaygheng is the best point from the river to reach Tappoon—though this is doubtful.

There has been a disturbance in the north part of the Bassein district which is stated to have been produced by men from up the country. They have burnt Pantanau, and I am now proceeding there with the Indus Steamer. A company of the 10th have moved out from Henzada to go south west. The fellows have commenced pursuing their usual tactics of driving off the population but they will soon be stopped in their career. Fytche¹ had only returned to Bassein, after leaving me at the mouth of the river, on the 21st, and he will have gone out with levies, although I have not actually heard of this. A company of the

19th N.I. is on the way to Bassein in boats. I send this letter down by boat through the Panlang Creek, and on my return to Yandoon from Pantanau I will again address your Lordship, if I think the letter will reach in time for the Fire Queen.

Perhaps a deal may be said about this disturbance in the Northern part of the Bassein district—and undoubtedly it must not be despised. I hope by the next mail to announce that it has been put an end to, but we must take care people do not gain strength again in the Donebew junguls. A party has gone out to the westward of that port also.

I will keep your Lordship informed of events by every opportunity. I am,

My Lord, with much respect
your obedient servant,

A. P. PHAYRE.

¹ Lieut. Albert Fytche, 70th Regiment Native Infantry, Bengal Army, was appointed Deputy Commissioner of Bassein at the close of the Second Burmese War. He did notable work in clearing the Bassein district of dacoits in the days of his Deputy-Commissionership there. A descendant of the famous traveller, Ralph Fitch, of Elizabethan times, the first recorded Englishman to visit Burma (1587-8), and of William Fytche, president of Fort William in 1752, he was also a cousin of Alfred, Lord Tennyson, the poet laureate. He entered the East India Company's service and travelled to India in 1839, John Nicholson being one of his fellow-passengers. In 1867 he succeeded Phayre as Chief Commissioner of British Burma and Agent to the Viceroy and Governor-General of India. He retired in 1871 and published an autobiographical work, under the title of *Burma, Past and Present*, in 1878. Fytche Square and Fytche Road in Rangoon to-day commemorate his care for the development of that city.

In 1868 he was promoted major-general and awarded the C.S.I. In the general election of 1874 he unsuccessfully contested Rye in the Liberal interest. Laurie in *Distinguished Anglo-Indians*, 2nd ed., pp. 118-33, includes a sketch of his career.

II

Private. On board Tenasserim, Khyouk Phyoo. February 20th, 1853.

My dear Phayre,

In the river on my way hither I met the mail, by which I received Genl. Godwin's letter reporting to me the advance to

Meeaday, and the arrival of envoys from Ava. He referred me for particulars to your dispatch. But by ill luck it was in some of the heavy boxes, and time did not admit of my examining them. I was obliged therefore to content myself with the fact that they had arrived, and that you had given them their reply. Judging by the official report of the state of affairs in Pegu, and of the general condition of the upper Country, as I find it reported here; of the total abandonment of the Pass and the country beyond it, and the flight of the inhabitants from sheer want, I feel the chances in favor of the conclusion of a formal peace to be more satisfactory, than they have ever yet seemed to me to be.

Another small steamer, the Indus, is now on its way down to Rangoon. As soon as I can, I will send one here—of the Proserpine class—for I have no more small ones. When the war is over, and the regular Corps withdrawn, I conceive that this station is the best for the Arracan battalion's head quarters; and a steamer in the harbour will at all times enable the Commanding Officer to throw a force North, South or West, fully provided and rapidly, if it be requisite to do so.

I shall take no steps about a local corps, until I have your advice whether it is to be of Muggs or Karens or of both. Both classes have been fighting well, the former under Capt. Nuthall, the latter under Capt. Fytche. I intend Capt. Nuthall to have the command, whatever they are to be.

Tomorrow morning I proceed to your former Capital, Akyab, thence to Chittagong, and then back to Calcutta. My time will not admit of more at present. General Godwin's description of Meeaday seems to make it greatly preferable to Prome in every respect.

Yours sincerely,
DALHOUSIE.

12

Meeaday, Feby. 12th, 1853.

My Lord,

On the 10th of this month I had the honor to receive Your Lordship's letters of Decr. 30th Jany. 1st and Jany. 3d.

When I sent from this place my dispatch of the 28th of

January, relative to the mission from the Meng Doon Prince, I had not time to send to your Lordship any further intelligence. Early on the morning of the 29th I accompanied General Godwin to the stockade near this, from whence we did not return until 11 p.m., and the Steamer left immediately. I trust this will explain satisfactorily the cause of my apparent remissness.

On our occupation of this place not a soul was to be seen. The neighbouring population had for the most part been driven off, but still a few remained in the vicinity. I had foreseen that a few horsemen would be of use to the garrison here, and was under the impression, at the time the General left, that 25 or 30 would remain. It seems, however, that all were ordered to march back to Prome with Sir J. Cheape's force. I very soon experienced the want of them.

Two days after our arrival a neighbouring villager came and reported to me that armed men under the late Myothoogyee¹ of Meeaday was driving off the villagers. It being late, we did not follow them up till the next morning, when we came up and released them. This was what first brought the people of the country into this Post. Subsequently I received several applications from villages at a greater distance, and had we only had a few horsemen, they could likewise have been released without any difficulty. As the orders the Commanding Officer had received, restricted him a good deal to this position merely, he could not undertake an operation which required more than a day's absence. On my return to Prome, however, I hope to rectify this, which has been a source of exceeding vexation to me during my stay here. I have received numerous applications for assistance from the people around, who were being driven off from their villages, but have been obliged to turn a deaf ear to them. The man, who controuls [*sic*] the few Burmese irregular soldiers in the Meeaday district, is Mounng Bo, and it is supposed that he is temporising between the King and the Meng Doon Prince, ready to submit to the fortunate one.

Regarding the site for a cantonment and the boundary line, I feel sure that a good cantonment is to be found at a place called Zan Khyoung two miles south of this. The boundary line had perhaps best be carried to the end of the Meeaday Township jurisdiction, which lies about 16 to 20 miles north of

this. I do not state this as positively the best boundary, but that it will probably be found the most convenient, should your Lordship see no objection to our going so far.

When I go down to Rangoon I propose at once to dispose, subject to approval, of the town lots, which are now being laid out by the Engineers. The plan will certainly be an expensive one, but I feel assured that the sale of the land will fully meet the outlay. The lots will, I propose, be liable to two assessments: one a ground assessment in lieu of capitation tax, and one a house tax for the support of the town Police. I shall be careful to observe your Lordship's direction regarding property held by persons previously within the Town limit.

I am grateful to your Lordship for having sent the muskets. As I write without any table I hope this very ill-written scrawl may be excused. I have remained at this place a day or two after the arrival of the Steamer, which came to convey me down, in order to see if some Burmese Officers, who had sent me messages expressive of their submission, will come in or not. The man termed Bundoola, whose name is MOUNG GYEE, is with me, and living in the same PHOONGYEE house. I find him useful, and very willing to impart information. I now close this letter, but shall write again before the mail closes, and beg to remain

with much respect, My Lord,
your obedient servant,

A. P. PHAYRE.

¹ Myothugyi, i.e. the 'thugyi' or headman of a 'Myo'. Literally a 'myo' was a fortified town, but the word was also applied to the territory grouped around such a town, whether large enough to be considered a province (the chief officer of which would be called a Myowun, i.e. the bearer of the burden of the 'myo', or Myo-sa, i.e. the eater of the 'myo'), or merely a district, the governor of which would be a myothugyi, often a hereditary official. In some cases in Upper Burma descent was in the female line, and if there were no child, the office might pass to the man who married the late holder's widow. The myothugyi was the backbone of the old Burmese system of local administration, possessing important military and fiscal duties, police functions, and a limited judicial authority. Instead of a salary he received an assignment of land, and certain fees and perquisites, according to the custom of the locality. Included within his district there were smaller ones, the 'taik' and the 'ywa' (village), each with its

thugyi. It was the myothugyi's duty to see that these, and the many other subordinate officials of the locality, performed their functions regularly and properly. The proceeds of most local taxation passed through his hands on its way to the central government. It time of war he led the local levies. His appointment, or succession, would be notified to the central government, and ratified by it. When required to do so, he would submit to the central government a 'sittan' or revenue return, giving a complete account of his 'myo', something after the fashion of the Domesday Survey. Thousands of these palm-leaf manuscripts are now in the Rangoon University Library, and afford a wonderful field for the researcher, as yet barely scratched. (For excellent short accounts of Burmese local government *vide* Crawford, *Journal of an Embassy from the Governor General of India to the Court of Ava in the year 1827*, chap. xv, and Yule, *op. cit.*, *supra*, pp. 253-6.)

13

Prome, Feby. 14th, 1853.

My Lord,

I remained at Meeaday up to this morning, when I left and came down to this place in the Lord Wm. Bentinck Steamer. There is no news of any consequence to communicate.

A Burmese Officer named MOUNG PHO, who formerly held the Governorship of the districts of Tharawaddee and Mya-noun, sent me a message at Meeaday expressive of his desire to come in. He had abandoned his district and marched up the west bank of the river with the Bassein forces, which have gone up towards the capital. On reaching Melloon he heard such accounts of the King's position, and he, as being closely connected with influential persons in the Palace, could only look for death, that he appeared to think matters were desperate.

In reply I informed him he might come in, if so inclined.

Up to the time of my leaving Meeaday he had not appeared.

I am, My Lord, your most obedient servant,

A. P. PHAYRE.

14

Prome, Feby. 20th, 1853.

My Lord,

I have no intelligence of any importance to communicate by the present opportunity. Your Lordship will hear from other

sources the unfortunate result of the attack upon the Marauder Myat Htoon, by Captain Loch near Donabew.¹ The failure is to be attributed to want of proper precaution in going on without making close inquiry regarding the position to be attacked. Sir J. Cheape² will no doubt break up the band, though I fear they will not wait for an attack. There is, no doubt, disunion in the camp of Myat Htoon, and one of his subordinates brought in his (Myat Htoon's) adopted son as a prisoner to Sarawah. It is however a pity that Myat Htoon has been allowed to go on so long. All the elements of similar banditti are *now collecting* in this vicinity, and unless they are crushed at once, they will give trouble. I have addressed General Godwin on the subject, and but for the departure of Sir J. Cheape's force, he would have sent out one or more parties. The numerical strength of the garrison here, however, does not now admit of detachments. When the elephants arrive, however, our force in this neighbourhood will be increased by the return of the parties of the 18th Royal Irish and Native troops forming their escort. Within 40 miles of this, in a S.E. direction, a late Thooggee or head man has entrenched himself. He has not more than 200 men at present, but, unless attacked without delay, he will certainly become a second Myat Htoon. Already rice has trebled in price in this town consequent on his measures to prevent supplies coming in from the interior. On the W. bank of the Irrawaddy also, from 35 to 40 miles from this, the former Governor, MOUNG SHWÉ MOUNG, is intrenched, and his force of 700 men is now larger than it was three weeks ago. I mention these facts to your Lordship in order to justify my opinion, that the inactivity of a week in this country—and particularly at this season—only multiplies enemies and difficulties.

But as soon as troops are available, I feel confident that Genl. Godwin will put down these petty chiefs. Indeed he has assured me he will. At Meeaday I fear the same mode of annoying us is carried on by the enemy and with impunity.

I understand that the elephants have by this time arrived on this side of the Thonghoo Pass, although I have no positive information on the subject. Major Edwards of the 18th Royal Irish, who commanded the party which went to meet the elephants, is a good surveyor and draughtsman, and will, I doubt

not, furnish a good survey and account of the route. Your Lordship will then be able to judge of the expedience of making a road over that pass. If a road be constructed, troops from Prome can either be marched by that route, and meet steamers or other vessels at Amherst Island or Juggoo, (at the south end of Ramree) where there is good anchorage, or else march up the coast to Chittagong. Lieut. Mead is now engaged in surveying the route from Chittagong to Akyab, and when that is finished, he might usefully be employed in discovering the best route from Akyab—or rather perhaps from a point 40 miles North of Akyab—across the country to Talak-Aeng and Thonghoo.

Regarding our northern boundary, I think that on the Irrawaddy it need not extend further north, than the limit of the district subject to Meeaday—that is, some 20 miles north of the town of that name.

I have addressed Genl. Godwin regarding a cantonment. He has appointed a committee—Dr. Montgomerie, Major Fraser and a third Officer, Dr. McClelland, will also assist—and they will go up the river as soon as a steamer is available. I think it highly probable that the position at Zan Khyoung, two miles south of the Fort at Meeaday, will be chosen.

I am engaged in inquiries regarding the Revenue of this part of the country, and also regarding the teak forests—but any remarks on these points, which require so much detailed inquiry, would be premature. I am,

My Lord, Your Lordship's obedient servant,

A. P. PHAYRE.

¹ Captain Granville Gower Loch, R.N. (1813-53), was the second son of the distinguished economist James Loch of Drylaw in Midlothian. He entered the Navy in 1826, was promoted to be lieutenant in October 1833, commander in February 1837, and captain in August 1841, being one of the youngest post-captains in the service. He served as a volunteer in the war with China, and was present at the capture of Chin Kiang Foo as aide-de-camp to General Sir Hugh Gough. His brilliant capture of the fort of Serapaqui on the coast of Nicaragua in 1848, when sent to enforce redress for outrages committed against the British, earned him the C.B. and the compliments of Palmerston and Peel in the House of Commons. During the Second Burmese War, as second-in-command to Commodore Lambert, his main duty was to keep the river clear and drive the Burmese from their positions on its banks. On 4 February 1853 he was mortally wounded while leading a

joint naval and military expedition against Mya Tun's stronghold near Danubyu. His body was buried at Rangoon, the tombstone being erected by the officers and men of his ship, H.M.S. *Winchester* (*vide D.N.B.*).

² Sir John Cheape (1792-1875), a Scot of Rossie, Fifeshire, who, like Godwin, had fought throughout the First Burmese War. He entered the Bengal Engineers as a subaltern in November 1809, served in the Pindari and Maratha Wars, and was promoted captain after the siege of Asseerghur (1821). After the First Burmese War he was employed in civil engineering for many years. He distinguished himself greatly in the Sikh War, being chief engineer in charge of the operations at the successful siege of Mooltan in 1848, and playing an important part in the victory at Gujerat. For this he was made a C.B. and aide-de-camp to Queen Victoria. He became a brigadier-general in 1852 and fought in the Second Burmese War as second-in-command to General Godwin. After the failures of Lock and Steele to dislodge Mya Tun, largely through making the fatal mistake of despising their enemy, Cheape's operations resulted in the capture of the famous brigand's stockade near Danubyu, and his flight to Upper Burma. When Cheape retired in 1854, after 46 years' service in India, he was promoted major-general and K.C.B. Ultimately he became a G.C.B. in 1865 and a general in December 1866 (*vide D.N.B.*—which, however, commits the error of saying that the Second Burmese War ended with the annexation of Pegu and Tenasserim).

15

Prome, Feby. 20th, 1853
5 p.m.

My Lord,

In consequence of the steamer 'Nerbudda' having grounded a few miles below this place, all her mails did not come on in the first boat, and your Lordship's letter of the 1st inst.¹ I have only received by a second dispatch from the vessel now received.

With regard to including the Aeng Pass within our frontier; that pass has on this side the mountains two branches, *one* leading to the town of Pyng, and *one* leading to Napeh Mew. We might possibly secure the latter route by extending our frontier up to Memboo on the Irrawaddy. But that would perhaps be rather far on the plains; and I am not aware of any other road, passable for troops, leading into the Napeh Mew branch of the pass, south of Memboo. It certainly is not to be denied that the Aeng Pass might be made by the Burmese a

source of annoyance to us—as witness their lately having occupied the summit of it. Still it appears to me doubtful whether it is worth while going so far North, as would be necessary to secure the entrance to that pass, merely to secure ourselves against that annoyance. Up to Meeaday we secure the most valuable part of the Burmese dominions as regards cultivation and forest produce, and we find to all appearances a healthy situation for our troops. As regards our land communication with Bengal, I think it will be found that the Thonghoo Pass is more valuable than the Aeng one, so that the question of the propriety of taking both sides of the Aeng Pass seems to resolve itself into whether it will be worth while to deprive the Burmese of that one means of annoying us. I certainly think that with our force so close upon them they will hardly ever dare to use it in that way, and that the risk is therefore reduced to a very small quantum indeed.

Nevertheless I shall keep in mind what your Lordship has written upon the subject, and by no means consider the point as not open to still further inquiry. If a road along the foot of the hills on the E. side leading into the Aeng pass can be found, I shall consider it advisable to retain it.

For a local regiment to be raised here I would beg to recommend that it might be composed of Karens, Talaings (Peguans) and also Burmese and Muggs. If a few Malays could be procured also, I should think it advisable. If the Arakan Battn. could now be spared for service here, I feel assured it would be of very great service. They would march across the Thonghoo Pass. I was exceedingly glad to hear that the Arakan Battalion had been successful under Captain Nuthall against the stockade in the pass.² I am,

My Lord, with much respect,
your obedient servant,

A. P. PHAYRE.

¹ A reference to Dalhousie's official letter of that date in which he dealt with Phayre's suggestion in his official letter of 19 January (*I.S.P.*, Cons. 16 Feb. 1853, Nos. 11 and 12 respectively) that the English boundary should be advanced up to Myede (*vide* Letter No. 8), on account of the insalubrity of Prome and the valuable teak forests north of Prome. Dalhousie in accepting these reasons sanctioned the



[With acknowledgements to the Secretary, the East India United Services Club

SIR ARTHUR PHAYRE

step, remarking that (1) although the ancient boundary of Pegu was south of Prome, in modern times its accepted limit was north of Prome; (2) in the Proclamation of Annexation the word Pegu was used because it was the only one 'which would convey to all a general idea of the tract that was to be taken'; and (3) in the instructions to the commissioners and the letter to the King it was stated that Pegu had been annexed '*within such limits as should be fixed by the British officers*'.

² Vide Letter No. 9, note 1

16

Prome, Feb. 21st, 1853.

My Lord,

Some delay in dispatching the mail from this to Rangoon gives me the opportunity of adding a few words to what I have already written.

Regarding the laying out of the city of Rangoon, I believe the sale of the lots will fully meet the whole of the expense incurred in drains, roads, reservoirs and so on. These works will certainly occupy some time, perhaps two years, before they can be completed. I trust I shall have your Lordship's permission to sell the lots, as soon as I can return to Rangoon for that purpose. My reason for this is, that people are naturally anxious to provide themselves with shelter before the rains—and as in marking out the lines of road nearly all the present houses are destroyed, it will be necessary to give them the opportunity of building again as soon as possible.

I will be careful to bear in mind your Lordship's injunction regarding rights of parties, who had property before within the limits of the town. I would propose to offer them lots of equal extent to their former ground, at the average rate of lots in the vicinity.

The sale of the whole of the lots will produce, it is calculated, nearly four lacs of rupees. With this sum a really fine town may be laid out. I am,

My Lord, with much respect,
your obedient servant,

A. P. PHAYRE.

17

Prome, Feb. 25th, 1853.

My Lord,

I dispatch by boat to Rangoon the last intelligence from Ava, which, I hope, will reach in time for the mail steamer.¹ The intelligence is, I think, to be fully relied on. We may, I think, fully expect to see a deputation from Ava arrive here before long.

General Godwin is now going to send off a party against a man, who has been preventing rice from coming in here, and has entrenched himself about forty miles distant. The elephants have arrived all safe except two.

I trust your Lordship will excuse this very hurried note, as I am anxious not to lose a moment in dispatching the packet. I am,

My Lord, your very obedient servant,

A. P. PHAYRE.

¹ Viz. that King Pagan had been deposed and was confined to the women's apartments in the Palace, the Mindon Prince having been proclaimed king. The information was brought back from Ava by the messenger who had been sent with a letter from Commodore Lambert to the late Dalla Wun. The messenger reported that he had been taken into Mindon's presence, who had said 'that when supreme he would make any terms the English chose, to save the rest of the Kingdom and to put a stop to the miseries the people were enduring' (*I.S.P.*, Cons. 24 Mar. 1853, Nos. 70, 71; *vide* Letter No. 8, note 1).

18

Rangoon, March 10th, 1853.

My Lord,

I had the honor to receive your Lordship's letter of the 20th February from Kyouk Phyoo on the 2d inst. at Prome. It happened to come in while I was in company with the Reverend Father Domingo, who had come down again from Ava to announce that Burmese Commissioners would be sent, and might be expected at Prome about the 25th inst., and also to ascertain if the annexation of Pegu could not be recalled. The Priest was very anxious in the matter, to a degree which showed he was foolish enough to hope it might be effected. He said the

King was anxious to send presents to Her Majesty the Queen of England, and hinted that the Commissioners for the Treaty of Peace would not be forgotten. I replied that Her Majesty would, no doubt, irrespective of the present affairs, graciously receive presents, but that servants of the Indian Government were forbidden to do so; but that as to the annexation of Pegu, that was irrevocable. I also recommended him, in his communications to Ava to inform them we expected Burmese Commissioners to arrive with full powers, so that no delay might occur in signing the treaty. The rest of our conversation your Lordship will find recorded in my letter and statement attached thereto, on the subject of the Priest's second visit.¹

I am exceedingly sorry your Lordship had not received on the 20th Feby. my dispatch from Meeaday, regarding the first mission of the Priests. I trust the reply sent will have met with your Lordship's approbation. I still withhold the letter for the King, because your Lordship may wish to word it differently in some respects, now that another Person has succeeded to the Throne; I do not think any inconvenience will result from this. As far as I can judge, they seem ready to send envoys to treat in earnest. There can be no doubt, however, that our success, or want thereof, in quieting the country and putting down marauders, may influence the conduct of a Court, such as that of Burma, in sending envoys to treat. That has made me very anxious of late to chase away unsparingly the whole of the marauders, who have been infesting the Province. I am glad to be able to say that General Godwin has cordially entered into my views, and has taken measures now in progress, for extirpating the most dangerous of these marauders. Lieut. Fytche's conduct at Bassein is highly meritorious.² Your Lordship will have seen that the Comg. Officer at Bassein, to whom he had applied for aid, and who pleaded his orders for withholding it, had unfortunately committed suicide. He no doubt felt keenly being obliged to follow out strictly the orders he had received, not to stir out of his cantonments; such orders, however, act as a check upon enterprise and must retard, if not prevent, the settlement of a newly conquered country. I hope however that all is now in a fair way to be settled.

Regarding the local corps I shall draw up my proposition and

submit it for your Lordship's approval by the next mail. I propose that Talaings (i.e. Peguers), Mugs, Burmese and Karens should be admitted into the ranks, and, if possible, a few Malays.

From the inquiries I have made into the revenue of the several districts, I now have a more favourable opinion of the probable yield of the country, than I had at first. I cannot venture, however, even to hazard an opinion as to what it may produce in 2 or 3 years' time. For the present year, i.e. 1852/53, the collections will be next to nothing. The country has for the most part been permitted to remain in the hands of Banditti, who have completely rifled it.

I trust your Lordship will have been pleased with Akyab. There will probably have been a number of vessels in the harbour at the latter end of February.

I am happy to say there were symptoms of improvement in health at Prome, but it never can be a desirable station for Europeans, and a much better one can be found near Meeaday.

I am, My Lord,

with much respect, your obedient servant,

A. P. PHAYRE.

¹ *I.S.P.*, Cons. 24 Mar., No. 74. In his official letter Phayre wrote: 'I did not consider it necessary to interrupt the worthy father in his address, which was spun out to a considerable length, but I finally told him that the Printed Proclamation of the Governor-General, a copy of which I had already furnished him with, was irrevocable. Father Domingo, it appears from his own statement, has considerable influence or interest with the present King, who has promised to rebuild the Catholic Church, and to grant protection to the Native Christians. There are a large number of them above Ava. In addition to the natives, which Father Domingo would thus naturally have, for endeavouring to procure the terms he wished for the King of Burmah, it is evident that perhaps a stronger motive than all is his jealousy of the Protestant Missionaries (American Baptists), whom he could, under a Burmese Government, have had expelled the country; a measure which his evident zeal for his own cause would doubtless lead him to adopt. In the Bassein District (where Father Domingo had resided for some years) the Catholic Missionaries have for a long time past been endeavouring to establish Churches among the Karen tribes, with a view to counteract the great success of the American Missionaries among that people. The latter Missionaries would not be allowed under the Burmese Government to pursue their usual course of teaching

and preaching, so that a zealous Catholic Missionary would have strong reasons for upholding the Burmese rule in Pegu.'

² For a complete account of this exploit *vide* Fytche, *Burma, Past and Present*, vol. i, pp. 132-8, and Appendix B in vol. ii, pp. 220-51. Fytche on arriving at Bassein at the end of December 1852 found most of the late Burmese officials of the district with large bands of followers practising wholesale dacoity. Aided by Commander Rennie and the boats and crews of H.M. steam frigates *Nemesis* and *Zenobia*, which were stationed in the Bassein River, and with a considerable force of Karens and Talaings, he followed up and defeated near Lemena the late governor of Bassein, Mingyi Maung Ngo, mortally wounding the Mingyi himself and capturing two of his sons, with nine guns and upwards of 3,000 stand of arms. Owing to a recent repulse suffered by a detachment of the British garrison at Bassein, strict orders had been issued that no one was to leave the stockade.

19

Private. Govt. House, March 18th, 1853.

My dear Phayre,

I received by Berenice yesterday your several letters dated Feby 12th, 14th, 20th, 20th, 21st, 25th, and March 10th, for which I wish to thank you.

As regards the chief head of intelligence, namely the conclusion of a peace, the last letter so entirely supersedes all the others, that I need not notice that portion of them. I conceive that the arrival of Father Domingo, corroborated as his language is by all collateral reports of the events at Ava, and of the ruling feeling there, entitles me to entertain a sanguine hope that the envoys will arrive, and that peace will be concluded in all this month.

I have no doubt you are quite right, both as to the position of the frontiers, and as to the Cantonment being desirable beyond Prome. I am well disposed to go as far as Meeaday. As at present advised, I do not see the advantage of going 20 miles *beyond* Meeaday, unless it is really impracticable to find a boundary nearer to it: and I apprehend, if you do go 20 miles beyond Meeaday, it will not do to have the frontier-force 20 miles and upwards within the frontier. However, you will weigh these things well and decide for the best. I should decidedly object to taking more territory for the mere purpose of including the

Aeng Pass. We do hold it now for defensive purposes by the block-house which is building on the crest; and I set no great value on it at best.

If a peace be concluded, tell me, confidentially and for my own use, what troops you would like to have for the occupation of Pegu, and where they should be placed. Of course Genl. Godwin will be told officially to suggest this; but I should like to have your opinion also privately. It is very satisfactory to know that an adequate force has at length been sent against the several marauding Chiefs, whose existence is so mischievous. Capt. Fytche's proceedings have been admirable. The costive military policy, that has been pursued, in putting an officer into a place with positive orders not to stir out of it, is perhaps a very safe line; but it is *very* slow and quite superfluously safe. I hope we shall not need to lament that sort of thing any longer.

You have authority to do what you will regarding the town lots at Rangoon. Lt. Mead, I am sorry to say, was obliged to come in sick to Akyab just before I got there. He will endeavour to find a line ultimately from Chittagong to Tounghoop. I told Capt. Nuthall, when I saw him at Kyook Phyoo, that in return for giving us the stockade in the Aeng Pass, he should certainly have the command of the first regiment that was raised.

Believe me to be, Yours very truly,

DALHOUSIE.

P.S. You will receive by this mail a *secret* dispatch instructing you that the signatures of two Commissioners will be as valid as all three. Keep this to yourself—and say nothing about it to your colleagues unless the possible difficulty in obtaining a third signature should raise the necessity for producing it.¹ D. 21st March.

¹ *Vide* Introd., pp. lxiii–lxiv. Because in the official document naming the three commissioners for the treaty Lambert's name was mentioned first, this in accordance with strict etiquette being due to his acting rank as naval Commander-in-Chief, Godwin had threatened to refuse to affix his signature to the treaty.

Rangoon, March 19th, 1853.

My Lord,

I leave Rangoon for Prome early tomorrow morning by the Indus steamer. I expect to find Commodore Lambert at Yandoon, and he will proceed on with me. I hope we shall find the Burmese Commissioners there, or hear of their expected immediate arrival. If not, I shall send on your Lordship's letter to the King by a trusty messenger.

I have news from Sir J. Cheape's camp up to the 16th inst., and expect to hear of his attack on the robber Myat Htoon probably while on my way up tomorrow. Sir J. Cheape was encamped at Kyouk tanau, some 15 or 16 miles W.b.S. from Donabew, and some five miles in a direct line from Myat Htoon's position at a place called Kyoung Kazeen. All provisions, stores, carts, &c. required by Sir John, had reached him, and I conclude he would move to attack the following day, that is the 17th inst. Captain Tarleton with the gun boats is about Pantano to stop him in that direction, and Captains Fytche and Rennie are, I trust, still in their position west of Myat Htoon's entrenchment. All that can be done will be done, I feel assured, to capture him. If these robbers are not rooted out without mercy, not only will the difficulty of settling the country be very much enhanced, but I fear that the Ava Court may be induced to hang back; for there is really no knowing, but that the temporary success of a man like Myat Htoon may have a wonderful effect upon people so haughty and ignorant as Burmese great men.

I have applied for sanction for a light vessel for this Port, as I find everyone advocates it instead of a Light House. The Imports and Exports appear to go on well. The duties levied have been as follows:

Feby. on Imports	Rs. 4549. 0. 0.
„ Exports	636. 0. 0.
March up to the 16th. Im. and Ex. duties	<u>3732. 0. 0.</u>
Total	Rs. 8917. 0. 0

and when the country is pacified, there cannot be a doubt but

the average monthly duty will be much greater. I do not purpose making any application regarding Pilots until I have seen my way a little more. The Commodore, I see, wishes them to be Govt. paid servants, which I confess I am not favourable to. I have proposed to impose a tonnage duty of eight annas a ton on vessels on and from the 1st Octr. next. I cannot say that this amount will positively cover the whole expences of the Port, but I think it extremely probable that it will be sufficient.¹

I have had the pleasure of meeting His Excellency Sir F. Pellew² several times, and have been much pleased with the lively interest he takes in everything going on here. I believe H.E. will leave for Madras and Ceylon before long.

I transmit by this mail my proposition regarding the sale of Town lots in Rangoon, which I trust will generally meet with your Lordship's approbation. I am, My Lord,

your most obedient servant,

A. P. PHAYRE.

Your Lordship will probably hear that Genl. Steel³ occupies Toungoo. I understood Genl. Godwin to say he could not hold that position at present, in consequence of a difficulty in rationing the troops there. I am not in a position to be able to give a decisive opinion upon that subject. Colonel Bogle, from whom I heard, appears to think the place ought to be occupied, but does not speak highly of the town as a place of any importance.

¹ For Dalhousie's reply to these points *vide* Letter No. 22, note 1.

² The new naval Commander-in-Chief who succeeded Rear-Admiral Austen. Sir Fleetwood Broughton Reynolds Pellew, second son of the well-known admiral, Viscount Exmouth, was 63 years of age when he hoisted his flag on board H.M.S. *Winchester* as commander-in-chief on the East India and China station. His harshness was a by-word in the Navy, and there was great opposition to his appointment. When news arrived in England of his treatment of mutineers on board the *Winchester* at Hong Kong in September 1853, *The Times* attacked him in a series of leading articles, and he was summarily recalled by the Admiralty. He died at Marseilles in 1861 (*vide D.N.B.*).

³ Sir Scudamore Winde Steele, 1789-1865, was appointed a cadet in the East India Company's service in 1805, and entered the Madras Army. Like his colleague in the Second Burmese War, Sir John Cheape, he took part in the Pindari, Maratha, and First Burmese Wars. Promoted major in 1832, he was secretary in the Military department at Madras 1832-45, being made a C.B. in July 1838. As brigadier-general

he commanded the Madras division of the Expeditionary Force in the Second Burmese War. He conducted the operations which began on the Salween River in January 1853 and resulted in the occupation of Toungoo and the subjugation of the eastern portion of the province of Pegu. For this he was made a K.C.B. in December 1853. In 1854 he was appointed to the command of the Pegu division and was made a major-general. He returned to England in 1856 (*vide D.N.B.*).

21

Donebew, March 21st, 1853.

My Lord,

I arrived here at 2 p.m. this day by the steamer Indus, and had the satisfaction to receive from Captain Smith the Dep. Comr., who accompanied Sir John Cheape, a dispatch reporting the fall of the entrenched position occupied by Myat Htoon.¹ The loss appears to have been severe, though the number is not mentioned. Myat Htoon, I regret to say, has escaped. This success will tend, no doubt, much to facilitate our dealings with the Burmese envoys at Prome a few days hence. The country, where Myat Htoon had his position, appears to be of an exceedingly difficult nature from the thickness of the jungal. I have not yet heard the name of any Officer killed. Sir J. Cheape intends returning at once to Donebew, and a Post must undoubtedly be established there. I am,

My Lord, with much respect,

Your Lordship's obedient servant,

A. P. PHAYRE.

¹ Laurie, *Pegu, being a Narrative of Events during the Second Burmese War* (London, 1854), pp. 251-75, gives a full account of Sir John Cheape's operations against Mya Tun. Official accounts of it are to be found in Fytche, *op. cit.*, *supra*, ii, pp. 229-34, and *I.S.P.*, Cons. 29 Apr. 1853, Nos. 51, 52.

22

Private and Confidential. Govt. House, March 31, 1853.

My dear Phayre,

I have received to-day your two letters of the 19th and 31st, and reply at once while I have leisure, lest I should be hurried when the mail day comes.

The un-earthing of the three Chiefs is good; but the loss in attacking Myat-toon is very very sad. It is no blame to any one to say so, for it has evidently been very formidable work. I hope Fytche will catch him, tho' the chances are against his doing so in such a jungle. No doubt this, and General Steel being at Tounghoo, will smooth matters much with the Envoys from Ava. General Godwin, writing from Prome on the 14th, says Father Dominic confidently predicts their arrival by the 25th. If this thing is well done, compliments ought to pass, and handsome presents should be sent. Let me know what sort of things would be acceptable to their King, if you can find out. Don't regard expense in your recommendations.

I have already attended to your letters about lighthouse,¹ local corps, and Rangoon and general establishment; and expect to send you replies to all by the outgoing mail. Col. Bogle, I hear, finds out that Tounghoo is on the *other* side of the Sitang. If he raises any question about the bounds of his jurisdiction, and refers it to Govt., I am sure you will not raise any difficulties to an adjustment, unless there be valid public objections. He has felt strongly his not going to Pegu, and, if he can be humoured in respect of the share he has got, it will be politic to do so, as well as considerate.

Always yours very truly,
DALHOUSIE.

¹ In his official letter of 19 March 1853 Phayre had recommended that, in preference to building a lighthouse at the mouth of the Rangoon River, a lightship of 100-200 tons should be stationed there. He estimated the total cost of upkeep at not more than Rs.600 a month. When the proposal was referred to the Superintendent of Marine at Calcutta, he suggested that the *Tavoy*, lately condemned as unfit for the duties of pilot vessel at the Sandheads, would give many years' service as a lightship. But he stated that in his opinion a lighthouse 140 feet high with a radius of 15 miles, built half-way between Elephant Point and the entrance of the China Bakir River, was preferable to a lightship. A vessel, he estimated, would cost Rs.800 a month as against Rs.200 a month in the case of a lighthouse, so that in twelve years the difference in maintenance would pay the cost of building the lighthouse. The one advantage of a ship would be, he thought, as a residence for pilots awaiting the arrival of ships. He commented severely upon Phayre's suggestion of raising the Rangoon port dues to 8 annas a ton, remarking that Calcutta charged only

4 annas a ton and provided greater benefits in the way of lights and buoys. And he expressed his opinion that if a lighthouse were built at the entrance to the Rangoon River, pilotage left to public competition, and pilots paid by ships entering and leaving the port, in a very short time port dues of 2 annas a ton would pay the expense of lighthouse, buoys, and the interest on money expended on buildings on shore. Dalhousie therefore ordered that the *Tavoy* should be sent at once to the mouth of the Rangoon River as a lightship; but he informed Phayre that as Captain Rogers, the Superintendent of Marine, had proved that a lighthouse was preferable to a lightship, this opinion should hereafter be acted upon. Pilotage, he thought, should be left to private enterprise, and a maximum of 4 annas a ton should be charged for port dues. One passage in his letter is interesting and amusing as throwing light upon the vast difference between sea-borne traffic then and now. 'If it be thought expedient, one or two pilots may be entertained for Government vessels,' he wrote. 'Even this I should hardly consider necessary. Rangoon is only 25 miles from the sea, the shoals are already buoyed, the pilotage is very easy and every Commander of a Government vessel on the line ought to be perfectly able to take his ship up without a Pilot.' The more recent increases in the size and draught of ships have rendered this a vastly different matter now (*vide I.S.P.*, Cons. 29 Apr. 1853, Nos. 60-4).

23

Prome, April 3d, 1853.

My Lord,

On the 27th of March a letter was received here from Burmese Envoys, who had established themselves at a place about 16 miles above Meeaday. The letter stated that they had come to negotiate. We replied that we were ready to receive them, and hoped they would be down by the 31st. On the evening of that day they arrived here. They are

1. Mounng Gya oo, the Principal Minister of State under the late King, and styled Kyouk Mau Men-gyee.¹
2. The old Dalla Woon, Commodore Lambert's friend.
- 3d. A Woondouk or Minister of State of the Second Grade. There is likewise a member of the Royal Family,² but they do not state whether he is one of the Envoys or not.

We have arranged to meet them tomorrow Monday, the 4th, at 10 a.m.

We have determined the boundary which we shall offer them.

It is not so far north as I at first proposed, but I trust your Lordship will see it is ample for us. As your Lordship will remember, I have proposed to carry our boundary to the end of the Meeaday jurisdiction, and also to the end of the Toungoo district. The General, however, thought that this might make it so unpalatable to them, as even to endanger the ratification of the treaty by the King. No doubt this might happen. As carrying the boundary far beyond Meeaday is of no advantage to us, as it gives us no rich country; as we could scarcely go far enough to get near the Aeng Pass; and as the hill country only would not afford us a road to that pass, or be of any great use for Police purposes, I finally adopted with the General the following line, namely: six English miles North from the Fort of Meeaday—The line to be run in that latitude West to the Arakan hills, and East to the Sitang River and Red Karen territory. This will secure to us all the best country, and, I believe, the best of the Toung-ngoo forests.

Regarding the conference with the Burmese Envoys, we have deemed it right to abstain from all discussion. This may perhaps appear uncourteous, even harsh. But I feel assured, My Lord, that if we once commence discussion on the boundary, the conferences will be interminable, not to mention that discussion cannot possibly lead to any good end. There can be no doubt that the Burmese will have picked up, through Father Dominic and others, that several Officers here talk of our being bound to the limits of Pegu proper. They would be prepared with never ending arguments to limit us to the line of Akouk toung below Prome, and would deny our right to Toungoo altogether. I have good reason to believe that they anticipate making a long talk on all these points. We have determined to have no discussion at all on the point, and I trust your Lordship will approve of this resolve.

Should the Commissioners not satisfy us of their full powers to *sign* a treaty, we propose immediately to deliver to them your Lordship's letter to the King—for we must even now be prepared to find that this deputation is merely to gain time, and is not a sincere one. General Godwin, to my surprise, told me he should at once have marched on Melloon, as towards Ava, if the Burmese Envoys had not arrived. I informed him that I thought

the proper plan would be to send your Lordship's letter to the King first. This would be giving a month's warning, and in the mean time your Lordship's instructions could be received. The General then appeared to think otherwise; I hope, however, he will and has now altered his opinion; at least, I supposed your Lordship did not wish for a march towards Ava without special instructions from your Lordship to that effect; had, therefore, the General marched beyond the Meeaday district, while there was still a probability of Envoys coming, and before the letter to the King had been despatched, I should have felt compelled to hold back. I trust your Lordship will put me right if I am in error.

There are strong reports all through the Prome district, and also at Meeaday, that the present King has appointed Governors to the several Provinces we hold. That the man, against whom Major Hughes' party went in this district, at the beginning of March, amongst others, has been appointed Governor of Prome. This is by no means incredible. He shall, however, be diligently hunted out. We may be sure, however, that if the treaty is signed, some such scheme as this will probably be carried out—whereby the country may be harassed and the Burmese Govt. would, to any representation, reply, 'we know nothing about these disturbers of your country—they are robbers'. As long as they do not find refuge in the Burmese territory, we shall be able to deal with them.

I forward this letter to your Lordship now, as a steamer leaves for Rangoon tomorrow, and the mail to Calcutta may possibly start from Rangoon before another opportunity occurs—or before our negotiations here make it advisable to dispatch an express from this.

Your Lordship will probably have heard from Colonel Bogle that he thinks both sides of the Sitang River from Shwé Geen upwards should be put under the Officer in charge of Martaban Province. I think it will be necessary eventually to appoint a Civil Officer to Toungoo—in fact to form a new district there pertaining to the Province of Pegu—but I will not form a hasty opinion upon the subject.

I have omitted to mention to your Lordship that we have ventured to include in the 2d Article of the treaty a clause pro-

viding for the appointment of Commissioners to lay down the boundary. I trust this will meet with Your Lordship's approval. As soon as the treaty is signed it will be dispatched for your Lordship's ratification;³ and until that arrives, I purpose remaining at Prome for the purpose of setting in motion the expeditions necessary to clear this district. I am, My Lord,

with much respect your obedient servant,

A. P. PHAYRE.

¹ *Vide* Appendix I, 'Burmese Governmental Organization'.

² The Yingé Prince, who had been living in great poverty until Mindon's accession, when royal favour was accorded him.

³ The draft treaty, in the form in which it was presented to the Burmese envoys at this conference, runs as follows:

Treaty of Peace between the Honorable the East India Company on the one part, and His Majesty the King of Ava, on the other, settled by His Excellency Commodore G. R. Lambert, R.N., Commander in Chief of Her Majesty's Naval Forces in the Indian Seas, Major General Henry Godwin, C.B., Commanding the British Forces in Ava, and Captain Arthur Purves Phayre, Commissioner of Pegu, on the part of the Hon'ble Company, and by * * * * on the part of the King of Ava, who have each communicated to the other their full powers.

ARTICLE I

There shall be perpetual peace and friendship between the Hon'ble East India Company on the one part and His Majesty the King of Ava on the other.

ARTICLE II

His Majesty the King of Ava cedes to the Hon'ble East India Company in perpetual sovereignty the Province of Pegu, being the territories to the Southward of the boundary hereinafter described, namely (a) a line drawn due East from the summit of the Arrakan mountains in the latitude of, and intersecting a point six English miles north from the flagstaff in the Fort of Meeaday; thence continued in the same direction until it reaches the Sitang river and the territory of the Red Karen Chief. The particulars of the said line of demarcation will be settled and permanent marks erected without delay by Commissioners appointed by the respective Governments for that purpose, such Commissioners from both powers to be suitable and corresponding in rank.

ARTICLE III

The Honourable the East India Company and His Majesty the King of Ava will each permit the subjects of the other to carry on trade within their respective dominions, and they will give to such traders full protection and security.

ARTICLE IV

The Honorable East India Company and His Majesty the King of Ava shall mutually deliver up all Prisoners and other persons, residing in the territory of either power, who may wish to return to their own country.

ARTICLE V (b)

This Treaty shall be ratified by His Majesty the King of Ava within one month, the British Commissioners engaging that it shall be ratified by the Governor General in Council and delivered to the Burmese Commissioner within one month, at Prome.

(a) The original draft, sent by Dalhousie to Phayre, stops here; the Commissioners filled in the particulars of the boundary.

(b) This article was added to the original draft.

24

Private. Govt. House, April 18th, 1853.

My dear Phayre,

I have received with pleasure your letter of 3rd inst. Two days ago the Moozuffur arrived post-haste with a requisition for troops for Bogle. An insurrection, he says, has broken out at Beleng [Bilin]—Brigadier Dickenson won't give him any troops, and so he sends on here. His letter is dated 9th. On 5th he wrote to me giving the most flourishing account of the peace of Beleng and every other place. On the 9th he says it is all danger. He has no reports from the officer—and his story is vague and crude—but he wants troops. I am by no means satisfied with this proceeding; but in order to be on the safe side, I send tomorrow 300 of 2nd Fusiliers, who, I hope, will not be wanted.¹

I take the opportunity of replying to your letter. It is a great step gained that envoys of rank have come at all. Whether they will sign, I can't tell. I think your course, in cutting short discussion, will at all events conduce to that result—and I have no wish for a large boundary. I hope the words you have introduced for naming Commissioners to mark the boundary will not leave them a loophole for reopening the whole question. I cannot conceive that General Godwin could have been serious in talking of marching on Ava. He not only knows that it is directly contrary to my views and wishes, but it is in the teeth of his orders. In a dispatch, dated 13th August 1852, containing his

general instructions, he was told 'The G.G. in C. has finally resolved that under present circumstances he will not direct the Major General with the army, which shall be assembled under his command, to undertake to march upon the capital of Burmah'; and the letter then went on to order him to convey a *force to Prome*, and to take measures 'for completing the military subjection of the Province of Pegu'. I shall write to him, and simply saying you seem to have the impression of his so intending, shall remind him of his orders. All this is very vexatious—and constitutes a state of things, which I earnestly hope the signing of a Treaty will terminate.

I see no reason why you should not have the Arracan battalion or most of it round, if you like. It is a military corps, however, and you must speak to the General or write officially. I advise you to have no *Taliens* in your Pegu battalion. Everybody says they are cowards or worse.

You had better send some one as Civil Officer to Tounghoo—any body you can get. Bogle's authority must not go to that frontier. We can't have two Kings in our Brentford.²

Yours in haste very truly,

DALHOUSIE.

¹ Colonel Bogle had written on 9 April to Brigadier Dickinson, the officer commanding at Rangoon, reporting a serious rising at Bilin, led by former officials of the Burmese Government, who had murdered several headmen and captured 150 commissariat bullocks, killing their drivers. He asked for all the troops that could be spared, or, if none were available, for a steamer to be sent urgently to Calcutta for reinforcements. Lord Dalhousie received Bogle's letter on 16 April and immediately dispatched the troops mentioned in his letter, but he remarked in his minute: 'I think this affair bears all the appearance of haste and flurry.' The action of the brigadier also annoyed him. 'It should be observed that in a recent dispatch, No. 32, 21st Feb., 1853, the Major General [Godwin] stated that he had "an abundance of soldiers for all purposes, and it would be throwing away money and trouble to send any more". He further stated that at Rangoon they had 2000 disposal men' (*I.S.P.*, Cons. 29 Apr. 1853, Nos. 39, 40). The insurrection turned out to be a more serious one than the Governor-General had imagined, and in the end Bogle's prompt and successful measures in putting it down earned for him the thanks of the Government of India.

² Colonel Bogle had been given authority over the newly-conquered territory on the east of the Sitang (*I.S.P.*, Cons. 29 Dec. 1852, No. 11).

Finding, however, that the district of Toungoo stretched across the river on both sides, he proposed to include the whole district within his territory and place it under the Deputy-Commissioner of Shwegyin. Under the circumstances, however, Dalhousie decided that 'the existence of the authority of two commissioners on one frontier is not expedient' (Official letter of 18 April 1853, *I.S.P.*, Cons. 29 Apr. 1853, No. 88).

25

Prome, April 6th, 1853.

My Lord,

Since I last addressed your Lordship on the 3d inst. we have had our meeting with the Burmese Commissioner. It appeared that the Woongyee, named MOUNG GYA OO, (who is mentioned in the statement of Father Domingo, which I forwarded with my letter No. 25 of the 10th March) was sole Commissioner, but with orders to consult his companions. They were received with every mark of distinction by us, and, after satisfying each other as to our powers &c., we produced the treaty, which was read deliberately through by the Woongyee. He asked time to consider it. We considered this to be fair, and agreed to give 48 hours. That would have been today. It was found, however, to be a Burmese worship day and we agreed to postpone the meeting to Friday the 8th inst. They dispatched a boat to Ava the night of the 4th, and from what the Woongyee said to Mr. Edwards¹ yesterday, (he went there with my permission on a visit) there can be little doubt but that he *dare* not sign the treaty, giving up the country across from Meeaday to Toungoo, and the Red Karen territory, without orders. This morning I had a long visit from Father Domingo, who expressed great anxiety as to what the King might do in his rage to the Christian people at Amerapoora. It seems the Burmese have anticipated a long argument with us about the boundary of Pegu, and, as the Burmese translation of the treaty laid down distinctly the whole frontier, districts by name, through which the line was to be drawn, and we verbally assured the Woongyee we could enter into no discussion on the subject, the Envoy was perplexed as to how he could possibly delay, and gain time for reference. On Friday if he refuses to sign, I purpose delivering to him your Lordship's letter to the King, and explaining verbally that one month is there given them to come to terms. We should then

request him to withdraw beyond our territory, and stop all intercourse until further instructions from your Lordship. If he returns within the month and signs the treaty, well and good; if not, it depends on your Lordship what further steps should be taken. But, as I before mentioned to your Lordship, I purpose, if General Godwin should go on at once beyond the territory we demand, not to accompany him.

At the meeting on the 4th the Burmese Envoy over and over again repeated, that they, the Burmese, were altogether in fault—that they had not a finger's point to urge in defence—all they asked for was generous consideration—that to deprive them of so much country was to leave them without an abode—that he asked for help—they were like children left without parents—that the present King had always opposed the war and asked for consideration, and so on. I made notes of Proceedings at the time, and these will be duly forwarded, when the Commissioners report of [*sic*] the Proclamation, namely the cession of the territory of Pegu. This document does not appear to me to require any comment. Mr. Edwards, who went over to the Woongyee this morning to hasten them in preparing the paper, says the Woongyee appears rather desponding, and that he said he did not venture to leave this, as he was ordered to make peace. This shows that they are anxious on the subject, and I think your Lordship's letter will produce orders from the King at once to sign it. I am,

My Lord, with much respect

Your Lordship's obedient servant,

A. P. PHAYRE.

¹ Mr. R. S. Edwards. Long resident in Burma and possessed of so acute a knowledge of the language and customs of the people that he was invaluable as interpreter or attaché to English missions to the capital. He had served in this capacity with Major Burney, and again throughout the Second Burmese War. After the annexation of Pegu he was created first Collector of Customs at Rangoon under the British dispensation.

26

Prome, April 9th, 1853.

My Lord,

Yesterday we had our second meeting with the Burmese Commissioners. As at our meeting on the 4th we had given them a

draft of treaty, in which the line of boundary we required was very distinctly laid down, I considered that we should have a very simple day's work. I went prepared to hear the objections of the Burmese Commissioner, but, according to our previous plan, not to discuss the boundary with him. I fully expected indeed that he would not sign the treaty, as he really dare not do so; I therefore carried with me your Lordship's letter to deliver to the Burmese Commissioner.

On the Burmese Commissioner referring to the Proclamation of the 20th Decr. 1852, and saying that the boundary, laid down in the treaty, was not in accordance with it, to my great surprise General Godwin openly said it was true that they were not in accordance with each other, and that the Burmese had the best of the argument. He was joined in this by Commodore Lambert, who, however, did not use such decided language as the General did. These expressions were, of course, not translated to the Burmese Commissioner, but he had two Armenians with him, who thoroughly understood English. I had considerable difficulty, speaking in an undertone, in persuading the General that we ought not to enter on this subject, and at last was obliged to say that he ought to have thought of this, before he gave the Burmese Comr. the draft of treaty on the 4th inst., in the second article of which Meeaday and Toungoo were included in our boundary. We at length agreed, therefore, that no reference was necessary to your Lordship, beyond the ratification, as we already had ample authority to define the boundary as we had done. I had, strange to say, some difficulty in persuading the General to this, as he seemed to think we were bound by the strict terms of the Proclamation. I then spoke of delivering your Lordship's letter for the King to the Burmese Commissioner; this was after the latter had said he could not sign our treaty. The General was averse to delivering the letter, as he said the contingency of the Meng Doon Prince not agreeing to form a treaty of Peace, referred to in Par. 4 of letter No. 70 dated 2d March /53 to my address from the Secy. to Government, had not arisen. That the King did not refuse to treat but merely doubted whether our treaty was, as regards the boundary, expressed as it ought to be. I was determined to deliver the letter, as I considered I had full and sole authority to do so; and,

as at the last meeting we had given the Burmese Comr. a draft of treaty, and told him we expected him to sign it at our next meeting (the 8th), the present objection to do so appeared to me the kind of refusal contemplated in your Lordship's instructions. But I wished to carry the General with me in the affair, and at length I had his consent and the Commodore's. The letter¹ was therefore delivered, and the fact noted in our Proceedings, of which a copy goes by the present opportunity.

I was quite unprepared for the course adopted by the General and Commodore. I, of course, knew that they had some doubts on the subject of the proper boundary, but on the 2d of April we had a meeting and decided on including Meeaday and Toungoo. A minute, I recorded and communicated to them both, is forwarded for your Lordship's information. Up to and on the 4th they both seemed determined on the subject. Since that, I believe, conversations with different Officers and the Revd. Mr. Burney, I understand, have induced them to believe they should not go beyond the limits of Pegu. Unfortunate as was this manifest difference of opinion between the two Senior Commissioners and myself—the room was full of Officers, that is, at least twenty, who heard all that occurred—yet the question stands thus, as it would have been, had no such difference existed; the Second Article of the draft of treaty lays down the boundary in the latitude of six miles North of Meeaday. The Burmese object to this, and your Lordship's letter to the King is delivered, which gives His Majesty one month to give in to our terms. This one month also enables us to refer to your Lordship, and in the mean time we have told the Commissioner that boats cannot be allowed to come and go on the Irrawaddy. I cannot see the least reason for giving way in our demand about Meeaday and Toungoo. The former is necessary as a station for our troops, and the occupation of the latter was contemplated all along. I do not think our demand for their cession will lead to a renewal of hostilities. However I rejoice that we shall have the benefit of your Lordship's orders, after hearing what the General and Commodore may have to say on the subject. The General was all for marching on Ava a few days ago, if they did not agree to our demands, or even if they delayed coming. The Commodore, though having doubts about the boundary (for

which he was not Commissioner), yet fully acquiesced in the draft of treaty. Yet both have now virtually retracted their then opinions and acts. The General is very obstinate in some things, and yet occasionally easily led away by a chance remark or conversation. I believe in the present case someone has mentioned to him that the true boundary of Pegu is at Henzada—or Sarawa. I have before written upon this subject, but do not again do so, because no new light can be thrown on the question; because opening such a subject with the Burmese would only lead to an interminable discussion, and because the reasons for going to Meeaday are sufficient. I shall be anxious to know that my views have your Lordship's approbation. The Commodore, I believe, is apprehensive of being had up before a Committee of the House of Commons when he goes home—should he sign the treaty. The strange part of it is, that this unwillingness has all come on since the 4th inst., or at all events has only been displayed since then. However, I will not weary your Lordship with further comments on the subject. Your Lordship will perceive that the discussion between the English Comrs. is not entered on the proceedings, because it was not repeated to the Burmese Commissioner.

12 o'clock.

I have just received the memorandum promised by the Burmese Comr., and a translation of which is sent in my official dispatch. It simply affirms that he, the Commissioner, has come to discuss a treaty according to the terms on the treaty. There is of course no calculating with any certainty what a person like the King of Ava may do in such a case; but I think the probabilities are that he will send orders to sign. They are fully convinced, I see, of being in our power. A Burmese Woongyee, imploring for help and consideration in the earnest manner this man did, is something quite new in the history of the nation. I only hope the feeling will last.

As regards the state of the country, the Eastern districts around Prome have not improved. I have addressed General Godwin on the subject in a private note, and he has not given me a decided answer. As soon as our treaty is settled one way or the other, I shall renew the subject.

It has been arranged that General Godwin is to sign the

treaty first, and the Commodore second. I need not say more upon this subject as your Lordship will doubtless hear of it from both of those Officers. I am,

My Lord, with much respect,

Your Lordship's obedient servant,

A. P. PHAYRE.

¹ The Governor-General's letter to the King of Ava (*I.S.P.*, Cons. 29 Dec. 1852, No. 4). After address:

'In reply to the letter which some time since Your Majesty caused to be addressed to the Governor-General of India regarding events that have occurred at Rangoon, Your Majesty was made acquainted with the reparation which the Government of India required for the insults and injuries which your servants had inflicted on its subjects there. Your Majesty was further informed that if such reparation were not afforded within a time which was named the Government of India would proceed to exact it by force of arms. Those just and moderate demands of the Government of India were not complied with. Accordingly Your Majesty's Cities and Forts upon the coast were forthwith attacked and captured by its ships and troops.

'The Government thereafter afforded to Your Majesty ample time and opportunity still to repair the injury that had been done. But your Majesty took no steps for that purpose.

'Wherefore the troops and ships were again advanced. Your Majesty's troops have been defeated and dispersed by them wherever they could be found and the Province of Pegu has been conquered and is now occupied by the British Forces.

'Since all reparation has been refused by Your Majesty for the offences committed by your servants. Since no amends have been made for violation of treaty and no submission offered to the State that has been wronged thereby; the Government of India in pursuance of its word has exacted for itself the reparation it required. For that purpose it has resolved and publicly proclaimed that the province of Pegu is now and henceforth for ever a portion of the British Empire in the East.

'The Government of India might justly continue to prosecute the hostilities in which it has been engaged to the entire extinction of Your Majesty's Kingdom.

'Your Majesty is well aware that the possession of Pegu and the command of the river Irrawaddy have placed in the hands of the Government of India full control over the trade and the supplies upon which your Kingdom so largely depends and the stoppage of which by the British ships during the present summer has already brought grievous suffering upon your Kingdom and people.

'Further Your Majesty can no longer disguise from yourself that the British Government by its steamships on the rivers and by the troops which it can dispatch in overwhelming numbers from the shores of

India against your territories, could speedily seize and occupy, at its will the rest of the Burman territories as surely as it has already conquered the province of Pegu.

‘But the Government of India desires no further conquest and does not seek to inflict further injuries upon Burmah. Satisfied with the reparation it has exacted and with the punishment it has inflicted it is willing now to consent that hostilities should cease.

‘If Your Majesty desires to secure your remaining territories from further war and to avert from yourself and from your subjects the evils which the Government of India has it now in its power to inflict, Your Majesty will take immediate measures for renewing the relations of friendship which formerly existed between the States.

‘If within one month from the date upon which this letter shall be dispatched from Prome officers of fitting rank and duly accredited shall arrive at Prome, and on Your Majesty’s behalf shall then sign a Treaty by which the conquered province of Pegu, within such limits as may be pointed out by the British officers accredited by this Government, shall be ceded to the Government of India, and by which liberty to trade in security within Your Majesty’s dominions shall be granted to British subjects, the Government of India on its part will bind itself to renew relations of friendship with Your Majesty, and to grant liberty to trade in security within the British territories to Your Majesty’s subjects, permitting the usual trade and supplies of your kingdom to pass its frontier in Pegu on the payment of such moderate duties as it may fix.

‘If Your Majesty shall refuse or neglect to conclude a Treaty in the terms above mentioned, and above all, if Your Majesty, reckless of the danger in which your kingdom is placed, shall attempt to dispute with the Government of India the possession of the Province it has declared its intention to retain, Your Majesty is solemnly warned of the consequences which will follow your acts.

‘In such case the Government of India will exercise the control it holds over the supplies and resources of your kingdom, and will again put forth the power it commands in order to repel and still more severely to punish the aggression.

‘Hostilities thus renewed, if Your Majesty shall venture to provoke them can have but one termination. Your Majesty may be assured that they will end whensoever the Government of India may so determine in the entire subjection of the Burman power and in the ruin and exile of yourself and your race.’

DALHOUSIE, 16 Nov. 1852.

27

Private. Government House. April 25th, 1853.

My dear Phayre,

On the night of the 21st I received your letters of 6th and 9th inst.

The dispatches were too late for the mail, but the substance of their contents was made known by me to the President and Chairman. At home they will, I think, regard the intelligence as favourable, altho' like myself they would, of course, have liked it better, if it had announced the actual signature. That a treaty was not concluded has been no fault of yours. I do not wish to say that it is any body's fault; but certainly the proceedings, which you describe, at the conference of the 8th, were most extraordinary and most censurable. You have had a difficult part to play, and have got out of it as well as any man could, who labored under the disadvantages which you have sketched.

On the merits of the questions I have written so fully and instructed you so explicitly that I think I have left nothing to add. The Burmese Envoy, tho' he has, cleverly, and, I have no doubt, at the prompting of that crafty Priest, taken up a plea that is plausible to those who are not informed on the subject, yet has not a leg to stand upon in reason and fact. Nevertheless public opinion is adverse to the war and would strongly, and I think justly, condemn this Government, if it lost a Treaty merely for the difference between Meeaday and Prome. You have, therefore, been told to give up that 'debateable land' if the Envoy holds out. If, however, he attempts another turn of the screw, and proves to be humbugging altogether, you are not to give in one inch further. I have fixed 10 miles as the maximum distance of the frontier from Prome.¹ You as G.G. agent are named solely for settling the exact limit as *sole* Commissioner. You will, therefore, be unobstructed. If there are any natural features to mark the frontier, perhaps they may be selected; if any territorial divisions, such as the Burmese boundary of Prome, they would be the next best. At any rate I would let it run as near Prome as it may, consistently with security and expediency.

These remarks, however, are not intended in any way to fetter your discretion.

I have learnt from other sources than your letter that officers and others were present at the conferences. It has been prohibited for the future. General Godwin has been told that it is not the wish of the Government to advance upon the Capital, and that he is on no account to do so without express orders from the

Government. He has been told also to send for the Arracan battalion round, if they would be useful.

If the envoys don't sign, and go away leaving the Italian priest, I should have no doubt that he is a spy and would watch him closely. In the hope of being able to congratulate you on getting a treaty after all,

I remain, Very truly yours,

DALHOUSIE.

P.S. Referring to an expression in one of your letters I would observe that the English and Burmese versions of the Treaty ought to correspond, as respects the boundary laid down in it. D.

P.S. The best course things could fall into would be that our Commissioners should begin by justifying our claim to a frontier at Meeaday, and that the Woonghee, if he will not consent to Meeaday, should be induced *himself to propose a line at Prome*.

D.

¹ The Governor-General's official letter (*I.S.P.*, Cons. 29 Apr., No. 76) clears up the vagueness of this sentence. If the Envoy was prepared to sign a treaty, but would not give way about Myede, Phayre might recede to a spot to be fixed 'at some point within 10 English miles to the northward of Prome and Tounghoo respectively'. If, however, he refused to sign, the negotiations were to be terminated and the English Commissioners were formally to declare that the British frontier was fixed at 6 miles north of Myede.

28

Private. Government House. April 27th, 1853.

My dear Phayre.

I have written to you separately regarding the Treaty. My object now is to say that, as I observe it stated that Myat-toon's sons have been taken, it is possible Captain Fytche may also get hold of Myat-toon himself. Some time ago you were instructed to deal very severely with dacoits, or plundering leaders, if they were captured. Altho' Myat-toon was not, I believe, in the service of the Government, and appears to have been a plunderer on his own account, it will not do, I think, to treat him as a dacoit or as a robber, and to deal with him criminally. A man who has 4,000 men under him, who repulses three British

attacks, and after a very stout defence is finally routed only by a Brigadier General, after a month's operations and with severe loss to us, must be regarded as a Chief and a Soldier—and a good one too.

Wherefore, if you catch him or his sons, don't deal with them criminally, but report what you would advise.

Yours sincerely,
DALHOUSIE.

29

Prome, April 17th.

My dear Allen,

I was so hurried in my official letters dispatched by steamer on the 9th, and the Commodore was so urgent for me to send them quick, that I had not leisure to send you a private letter. The public dispatches make our meeting with the Burmese Comrs. on the 8th look all smooth, I fancy. This is because it could not be otherwise. You may imagine my astonishment at my colleagues running off at the tangent they did. I wrote a full account of the matter to the Governor General, which you will have seen, and I don't think there is anything more to add. I really do believe that the Commodore was, from some persons' talk here, led to believe he would be up before a Committee of the House of Commons, if he adhered to the draft of treaty, which he had consented to on the 4th. What made the General change, I know not, unless it is spite in general at supposing he is not to be allowed to march to Ava! I assure you I am serious—this is quite a probable cause for the sudden change. However, by the 1st inst. I hope we shall have the G.G.'s orders on the subject, and in the mean time the letter to the King having gone, I feel easy on the subject.

You have not said anything on the subject of ladies coming to Rangoon. Am I not to be allowed to hope for better things. I assure you I am quite (indeed unhappily) disinterested in the matter—not being engaged to be married! I forward by this mail a recommendation regarding Toungoo, which it is absolutely necessary to make a separate district, as the place cannot be controuled from any of the stations. The sooner this is done the better, and I would beg to recommend that Mr. O'Riley be appointed to the district. He has been for a long time in Burmah,

is well acquainted with the people and the language, and from his active habits will be very well suited indeed to an appointment on a jungly frontier.

Regarding Medical men being appointed to charge of Jails &ca., when they shall be established, I should be very glad to see Dr. Davis, now the Civil Surgeon at Sandoway (uncovenanted), appointed to Bassein. He is a graduate of Trinity College, Dublin, and every way worthy of advancement.

Regarding timber, I had been presumptuous enough to feel certain that no timber could be seized as Prize after the date of annexation, and I felt so certain of the soundness of the principle that I have not hesitated to direct timber to be released which had been so seized. In fact the timber is private property beyond all doubt, and private property cannot be taken after the 20th Decr. It surely cannot be said that there was a constructive *taking of the timber* by proclamation, or order of the Genl., although it was not actually handled. I know not if the Genl. forwarded copy of my letter to him on the subject. As he, I knew, had referred the subject, I did not think it necessary to take any steps in the matter.¹

I hope the Toungoo district may be settled at once, as the Revenue then should be looked to, and I think Mr. O'Riley will be found an excellent man for the appointment.

Believe me, very sincerely yours,

A. P. PHAYRE.

¹ General Godwin had claimed as war booty for the army and navy 'all timber found lying in logs in the province'. The claim was referred to the Advocate-General, who gave it as his opinion that only what was captured in actual assault or by capitulation or surrender in fear of assault could be claimed in this way. The Government of India, however, referred the matter home for a decision. Meanwhile instructions for obviating destruction to trade and other inconveniences, caused by the seizures of wood made by the army prize agents, were sent to Godwin and Phayre for joint action (*I.S.P.*, Cons. 27 May 1853, No. 54).

Prome, April 19th, 1853.

My Lord,

I received on the 11th inst. your Lordship's letter of the 18th of March with a Postscript of the 21st idem. I am glad to find

that your Lordship approves of the line of boundary being drawn at Meeaday, and not beyond it 20 miles, as this is what had really been done; and I also find what I had determined on regarding the Aeng Pass, corresponds generally with your Lordship's wishes. As soon as the Treaty of Peace is concluded, I will inform your Lordship of my sentiments regarding the number and position of troops in Pegu.

Seeing no chance of being able to settle the country with the aid of General Godwin I have been obliged to make an application for troops to be placed under my orders. Without this I shall not find it possible to do anything.¹

The Burmese Woongyee is still here on the other side of the river—I have not seen him. The Dalla Woon came over one day, and, without being announced, entered my room suddenly by the open verandah. Of course I received him civilly. He said the Woongyee wished to have an interview with me, but I thought it better to avoid doing so, and returned an evasive reply.

On the 14th inst. there arrived from Ava Father Paulo Abbona, one of the missionaries who, your Lordship will recollect, came first to Meeaday. He came down in a boat with a number of men, and informed me he wanted to go to Rangoon and Maulmain entirely on private affairs connected with his mission. Subsequently he informed me that, hearing now of the terms which had been proffered in our treaty, he was afraid difficulty would arise, and that he wished to remain here. On my asking him for explanation, he stated as follows: That the King expected us to abide by the Proclamation; that the King was very mild and would not make war, but there was no knowing what his brother the Heir Apparent might do; that the King, if we exceeded the limits of Pegu, would not conclude a peace, would not sign away the extra territory. His Majesty said, 'If the English do not follow the path of Justice I shall not be satisfied'. The difficulty alluded to, I found on inquiry, was that the Missionary said he had taken up from Meeaday a copy of the Proclamation received from me. That he had told the King we never should go beyond Pegu, and now, if we did so, he feared being considered deceitful, and that the Christians at Ava would be made to suffer. He would not therefore leave Prome, as the people at Ava might say he had run away. He

stated the Burmese would certainly deny our right to Toungoo and Prome—how far they would admit the boundary of Pegu to extend, he could not say. He appeared to think that as a matter of course, on the King's rejecting the treaty, we should march to Ava. That the King would in that case either say 'I cannot resist you—I submit—take the whole country, since you take all that is valuable', or else that he would fly to the Shan country, and avoid us. The Revd. Missionary seemed to think that the King would not seek to dispute with us the territory we annexed, even though he might fail to make a treaty. In that case we might hold our own without a march to Ava. I hope to receive your Lordship's sentiments upon this point, for, as I have before mentioned, General Godwin might have precipitated events in an awkward manner by making a march towards Ava. I considered such a step as being against the spirit of your Lordship's instructions, and told him so. I cannot but think that Father Abbona's visit here had some other object than merely that of going to Maulmain. He came down in a fast boat, arrived late—that is about dusk—and yet wanted to go over and see the Woongyee forthwith. It is true that he brought intelligence of the King's marriage with the late King's sister (his own half sister), but that would hardly account, I think, for the evident haste displayed. When Father Domingo came down even to announce the approach of the Burmese Envoy, he came in a common boat with a few rowers. Last evening I heard a report that the Burmese Prince, styled 'Menmyaboo', well known in the last war as having commanded the army and being superseded therein by Bundoolah, had left Ava and fled to the Shan states, discontented with the present state of affairs. Men-mya-boo was half brother to Tharawaddee, and consequently uncle to the late and present kings. His Mother was a Shan, and his interest lies in that part of the Kingdom. If the fact be true it is very likely to make the Burmese wish to conclude a treaty of Peace at any cost. The news, however, is not as yet to be depended upon. I shall endeavour to learn more, and, if I hear anything of consequence, will dispatch an express for your Lordship's information. I cannot help thinking that Father Paul Abbona's sudden appearance may be connected with this event.

I have noted your Lordship's directions regarding the signature of two Commissioners, but believe the difficulty is not now likely to arise. I am,

My Lord, with much respect,
your obedient servant,

A. P. PHAYRE.

¹ In a letter of the 15th of April 1853 to the Government of India Phayre had asked for certain troops to be placed under his orders for the protection of civil officers engaged in introducing law and order into the interior districts. General Godwin had refused detachments of troops for this purpose on the grounds that 'were this army double its strength it could not keep down effectually the mischievous disposition of a great part of the population of this country'. In sanctioning Phayre's request Lord Dalhousie expressed his 'decided opinion' that Godwin had no real reason for withholding troops from the civil authorities when the introduction of order was at stake (*I.S.P.*, Cons. 27 May 1853, esp. Nos. 64, 69, 73, 74).

31

Private. Government House. May 16th, 1853.

My dear Phayre,

I have received your letter of 19th April. The non-arrival of the English mail of 24th March till the 14th inst. has necessarily delayed the steamer, and with it this reply.

It is of no use to speculate whether the Treaty has been signed or not. We must soon know. If they had any sense or any truth, I should make sure it had been already signed. As they have neither, I reckon on nothing. The words of the Priest do not go with me for much. They, of course, desire to make the best terms they can for the King—and may be trying to alarm us into giving good ones. I have obviated every possible reproach by taking a frontier at Prome, and from that I will not budge one inch.

I think you will find that the dispatches have satisfactorily settled for you the questions as to troops for civil purposes, timber, &c. The only other want you press is the women. I will allow them to go nowhere that there is danger. If you, as Commissioner, say they may safely go to Rangoon, they shall: but as yet they must not go to frontier stations. If you are prepared to assent, you may let it be known; and I will issue a G.O. A copy

of the orders to General Godwin, forbidding an advance to Ava without express orders hereafter, has been sent to you for your information. In the hope of having good news from you soon,

I remain, yours sincerely,

DALHOUSIE.

32

Prome, April 26th, 1853.

My Lord,

I received on the 24th inst. your Lordship's letter of the 31st.

I have no particular news to transmit by this opportunity. The Burmese Envoys remain quietly at the other side of the river. Regarding presents to the Court, I have made inquiries and believe that as the Queen is quite of a scientific turn (H.M., being the eldest daughter of a King, remained unmarried according to ancient custom until now, and was highly educated after the Burmese fashion), such articles as Telescopes and sextants would be very much prized. I beg to annex a list of what would probably be suitable, but by the next opportunity I hope to be able to give more positive information on the subject, and will transmit another list then. The present Queen received some instruction in astronomy from an English Merchant at Ava, Mr. Lane, and can calculate eclipses. Her Majesty, I am informed, knows the English numerical figures and uses our Nautical Almanac. She is at present about 36 years old.

Regarding our prospects of a peace I still think that the probabilities are that they will agree to our taking Meeaday—and the line across from that. Father Abbona at first seemed very positive that the King would never consent. There can be no doubt but that the Priest had informed the King we were sure not to advance our boundary beyond Prome. He was afraid both of losing his influence with the King, and perhaps of getting his people at Ava into trouble. When he knew our resolution, therefore, he was much moved. I think he has now become almost reconciled to the boundary as laid down. I find he fully expects to make the King a convert, and seriously assures me that he expects to take one of the young Princes to Rome. It must not, however, be forgotten that though the present King is peaceably inclined, his brother, the Kanoung Prince,¹ can

scarcely be said to be so. Still, I have great hopes that the treaty will be signed.

Regarding the boundary between Pegu and Martaban, your Lordship will have received my proposition to make Toungoo into a separate district. I do not see any difficulty in making that a district subject to Martaban, and under Colonel Bogle entirely. I feel, indeed, that will be the best arrangement that could be made, and, if your Lordship approves, and considers it advisable, I will add a supplementary letter on the subject. The only reason, why I did not propose this before, is that Colonel Bogle did not appear to wish for the hill territory up to the summit of the range; but if he knows he can have the services of an additional Officer for that purpose, I think he would no longer object.

There is a report of a *Chinese* Embassy to Ava, to induce the King to hold out and not conclude a treaty, but I place little or no dependence upon the report. I am,

My Lord, with much respect,

Your Lordship's obedient servant,

A. P. PHAYRE.

List of Articles which will form acceptable presents to the King
and Queen of Ava

Prome, April 26th, 1853.

1. A hand telescope.
2. A telescope with stand for astronomical observations.
3. Sextant and false horizon.
4. Celestial and Terrestrial Globes.
5. Phantasmagoria Lantern.
6. Microscope.
7. A singing bird toy.
8. Some fine Papier Maché boxes—Cabinets &ca.
9. Pocket Compasses.

For the Heir Apparent.

One or more Arab Horses.

Guns and pistols.

¹ Burmese princes took their titles from the districts, the revenues of which were assigned to them. The Kanoung Prince is usually referred to in this correspondence as the Heir Apparent, or *Ein she min*,

as it is given in Burmese. Although Mindon had sons of his own at the time of his accession, they were too young to rule in the event of his early death. He therefore designated as heir apparent his brother, the Kanoung Prince, in return for his services in the rebellion which dethroned Pagan Min. Later, in August 1866, two sons of Mindon, who resented the Kanoung Prince's position and control, murdered him while he was presiding over the Hlutdaw, attempted an abortive insurrection, and fled to British territory. Afterwards Mindon never dared again designate his successor. Hence the atrocities which marked Theebaw's elevation to the throne upon his father's death in 1876.

33

May 11th, 1853.

My Lord,

I have heard some story of Mr. Crisp¹ who was formerly at Rangoon and Maulmain having been engaged, it is supposed or stated by means of Father Domingo, to represent the interests of the Burmese Court in the matter of the Province of Pegu. I know not what credit is to be attached to the story, or to whom Mr. Crisp is deputed. I mention the statement, however, as reported, because I consider it my duty to do so. I am,

My Lord, with much respect,
your obedient servant,

A. P. PHAYRE.

¹ A Mr. C. M. Crisp, merchant of Rangoon and Moulmein, assisted the British to capture the Shwe Dagon Pagoda at Rangoon by providing them with a detailed account of the defence works erected by the Burmese around it. He was afterwards made Postmaster at Rangoon. But another Mr. Crisp with the initials M. F. had in May 1852 been threatened with deportation for interference with the natives in Pegu. The firm of Crisp and Co. was in the Governor-General's bad books for having sold military stores to the Burmese after the probability of an Anglo-Burmese war arose. For this reason their claim of damages to the amount of Rs. 41,490, arising out of Commodore Lambert's evacuation of all British subjects from Rangoon, when the negotiations broke down shortly before the war began, was summarily rejected.

34

Prome, May 11th, 1853.

My Lord,

The dispatches which go by this opportunity will inform your Lordship that the Burmese Envoy has rejected our terms of the

boundary to be drawn close to Prome and Toungoo.¹ The Envoy himself and his companions were evidently much agitated, and like most Burmese Ministers were afraid that either way they would be made responsible at Ava—that is, for signing away territory or for not preventing war. I fully expect that they will return and reopen, or attempt to reopen, negotiations, by asking us in fact to give the boundary we last offered, that is drawn close to Prome and Toungoo. In such a case I should feel grateful for your Lordship's instructions as to whether all hope is to be denied them. They will, perhaps, also ask to be allowed to send Envoys to Bengal. At the last moment they were anxious for 25 days' delay to be allowed to refer to the Capital. Father Abbona, who had been here, and who, I have before mentioned, had considerable influence with the King, came and told me that, if the matter could be delayed for that time, he would proceed to Ava, and he felt confident of being able to obtain H.M. consent. Father Abbona has left for Ava. There is also another course open. I believe the King, having just come to the throne after a revolution, is afraid to incur the odium of signing away the lower Provinces of his Kingdom. He may, however, silently acquiesce in our occupation and be ready to enter into a commercial treaty. In such a case I should be glad to know what your Lordship's orders will be.

I have received your Lordship's letters of April 18th, the 25th and 27th.

Regarding General Godwin's intention of marching towards Ava, I beg to enclose one of his notes to me on the subject, in reply to one I had addressed to him, pointing out that such a step was scarcely compatible with the instructions I had received, and made known to him.

I trust your Lordship will have approved of my recommendation regarding Toungoo, which indeed corresponds very closely with the instructions on the subject I afterwards received. There will be no difficulty in arranging the boundary of Shwégveen so as to avoid inconvenience to any one.

Regarding the Italian Priest, Domingo, I have no doubt but that he picked up ideas in Prome, which he communicated to the Envoy, or to the Armenians, who accompanied him. Father Domingo went to Rangoon some time ago. Father Abbona

returns to Ava, being afraid that the King will think he has 'run away', if he does not go back. In the English and Burmese versions of the Treaty what I alluded to was this: In Art. 2, where it is said the boundary line is to be in the latitude of a point six miles north of Meeaday, I enumerated the cities and districts on the border, that is, *Tharekhittiya* or Prome—and Toungoo, simply to make it more clear. The word *latitude* cannot be rendered in Burmese, and it is necessary to explain it by a long sentence. I was fearful this might lead to further discussions, and introduced the Burmese classic name for the district extending from the Irrawaddy East to the mountains, to fix the localities more clearly than could be done by merely translating the English words of the Article.

I will carefully observe your Lordship's instructions regarding Myat Htoon and his sons. He himself has no doubt escaped beyond the frontier. His adopted son was given up by one of Myat Htoon's followers just about the time of Captain Lock's attack. As he was not taken in arms, I have hitherto only kept him safe. Myat Htoon put his eldest son to death, because he supposed he was going over to us. Two sons, or adopted sons, of the former Governor of Bassein were taken prisoners by Captain Fytche, and I have directed they should be kept until my arrival at Bassein, when after inquiry I will report to your Lordship regarding them.

I am sorry there should have been cause for your Lordship's displeasure in the matter of several Officers having been allowed to be present at the conference of the 8th April. It undoubtedly was wrong, and I can only say that the concourse increased gradually until it became what it was. This was carefully prevented on the 9th and 10th inst.

Pending your Lordship's further instructions regarding negotiations, I shall abstain from taking any active steps towards reducing the country, or appointing village Officers &c., in the neighbourhood of Meeaday, and beyond Prome. As long as any doubt remains on the subject of the boundary line, the people are unwilling openly to declare themselves.

When once I have troops at my disposal, I feel satisfied that the whole country south of Prome will be pacified without difficulty.

I do not yet give an opinion regarding what troops should

garrison the country, until I know your Lordship's final determination in the matter of the boundary line.

I am, My Lord,
with much respect, your obedient servant,

A. P. PHAYRE.

¹ In his official letter Phayre announced that at a meeting on 9 May the Burmese Envoy refused to sign away territory, remarking that he had power only to offer to pay the expenses of the war. On the following day at a further meeting he expressly declared that although he had previously stated his willingness to sign a treaty in accordance with the terms of the Proclamation, he could not fulfil that promise. Whereupon the British Commissioners broke off the negotiations, and delivered to him the following written minute, as directed by the Governor-General: 'His Majesty the King of Ava having refused to renew relations of Peace with the Government of India the British Commissioners appointed to negotiate a treaty of Peace hereby declare to the Burmese Commissioner on behalf of the Governor-General of India in Council that the consequences of that refusal are upon the head of the Burmese King.

'The boundary proposed by the draft of treaty presented to the Burmese Commissioner on the 4th April 1853 having been rejected the frontier of the British territory is fixed at six miles north of Meeaday.

'The British Commissioners have been directed by the Governor-General of India in Council to warn the Court of Ava to respect that frontier and to cause it to be respected by Burmese subjects for all of whose acts the Court of Ava will be held responsible.

'The Governor-General of India is sincerely desirous of Peace, but he is also fully prepared for War, and he once more declares that if aggression be renewed he will again put forth the might of the British Government for the execution of measures which can lead to no other result than the total subversion of the Burmese power' (*I.S.P.*, Cons. 27 May 1853, No. 80).

35

My dear Captain Phayre,¹

I have had to do with these peoples, more than any one of our Country-men. The game they seem to be playing is just that of fresh wars.

They are within two days of this place, on a Mission that has been now *fifty-six* instead of *fifty-four* days—and they show no disposition to execute what they promised to do, but are settling themselves under our noses.

Now with regard to my moving, which I most decidedly shall do on Tuesday, unless they come here, [which] will only clear me of some very difficult ground—but if the delay should bring me into the Monsoon, would convoy my horsed guns.

If they do not come in ten days or twelve I shall move to Malloon.

Were they honest they would be here and I am certain any dilatory councils with us would make the affair interminable. As to the letter, it has nothing to do with our spurring them on by making a demonstration. I have now the means and shall not dissimulate as these elephants² could only have been sent for such a purpose.

faithfully yours,

H. T. GODWIN.

Sunday.

[*Endorsed*] Recd. March 27th, 1853.

¹ Phayre's handwriting is often extremely difficult to read, but of this letter, written by General Godwin, Miss Anstey writes: 'Phayre's writing is copper plate in comparison with this. Four of us (my assistant, myself and two experts here) have wrestled with it and even now I am not satisfied that we have deciphered the whole of it correctly.'

² *Vide* Letter No. 5, note 1.

36

Private. May 21st, 1853, Government House.

My dear Phayre,

I have received your several letters from April 26th to May 11th.

The news of the negotiations having been broken off were not a surprise to me. They were a disappointment: but they would not have been even that, were it not that the Home authorities much desire a Treaty. I regret that my original design of cutting off all formal connexion—neither demanding, nor asking, nor accepting a Treaty—was not adhered to. You will receive full instructions for your guidance in the event of negotiations being renewed, as you seem to anticipate. But under no circumstances will I *now* recede from Meeaday. Ava may become ours, but Meeaday never will become theirs again. I wish you would be so good as to send me a sketch map, with a scale of miles,

however rough, shewing as well as you can the boundary you have marked off. I do not quite comprehend how it goes near Tounghoo. Captain Allen or Mr, Garden will do this for me. I wholly object to making over Tounghoo to Lieut.-Col. Bogle. I beg you, therefore, to be so good as to carry on the arrangement previously decided upon, and to work the district through Mr. O'Riley. I cannot have two authorities on the frontier, of whom Col. Bogle is to be one.

We need not trouble ourselves at present, I apprehend, about presents for the new Queen with such very blue stockings. With respect to Envoys to Bengal, you may say that I shall be happy to receive any person or persons of rank, who may be deputed. They shall be sent up in a ship of war, and shall be treated with every distinction. But they must sign a Treaty of Peace first. Until they have signed a Treaty, I will not receive any of them, and you will not permit them to pass. Respecting what you term a Treaty of Commerce, your instructions are full.

Mr. Crisp may be here: but he has not been heard of; and, if he steps out on any such errand as you describe, he will get his answer, short and sharp. I am very sorry that Captain Fytche should have been so ill-advised as to address to the Government the letter to which you are told to reply.¹ That style of carrying on the service may pass with Deputy Governors, to whom he has been accustomed, but it won't do with me, and must not be tried again.

If these people make peace, well and good. If they do not, and are not likely to do so, but still are not likely to attack us in force, I propose to issue a Notification by way of closing the war, and then to break up the army; not removing a soldier at present, but merely doing away with the war footing.

Believe me to be, yours sincerely,

DALHOUSIE.

¹ There seems to be no reference to this *faux pas* in the official correspondence. Fytche had addressed a letter regarding his exploits against dacoits directly to the Government of India, instead of sending it through Phayre. This was probably the cause of Dalhousie's displeasure, but he makes no official reference to it.

37

Private. May 23rd, 1853. Government House.

My dear Phayre,

It has occurred to me that in the event of the Burmese seeking to renew negotiations, it might have a good effect, and serve to convince them of the fixity of our determination, if you were to stop them at Meeaday and hold your conferences there. This, however, may be rendered inconvenient by local circumstances, and I do no more than throw it out as a suggestion.

Yours sincerely,
DALHOUSIE.

38

Rangoon, May 27th, 1853.

My Lord,

I arrived here from Prome on the night of the 24th, and received your Lordship's letter of the 16th inst. I am now looking out for your Lordship's orders on the dispatches sent up by Mozuffur. In the mean time I have come here to push on the work of laying out the town. For this purpose I have proposed an Officer and establishment, which I trust will meet with approbation. On my way down I stayed at Donabew. The district is now quiet. All the Tharawaddee district which extends, for fifty miles along the east bank of the river, above Sarawah, is disturbed—and there I purpose employing the Arakan Battalion, as soon as they arrive. In the mean time some small amount of revenue for the year 1852/53 has been collected in different divisions, and I now am taking measures for a regular assessment of all the districts for the current year, which commences on the 1st May 1854.

As regards timber¹ the orders now arrived will save a great deal of loss both to Government and private individuals. I have taken measures for collecting the usual *forest* dues in such portions of the country as I have been able to exercise authority. The Tharawaddee forests—the best by far on the Irrawaddee—are sealed to us as yet. I now feel confident that with the help of the Sikh Regiment, the whole of the Prome district will be quieted.

I think, My Lord, that women may safely be allowed to come to Rangoon, but for the present they should not be allowed to go elsewhere—not even to Bassein.

Your Lordship will be sorry to learn of the death of Colonel Coote 18th R.I.; he had been in very delicate health at Prome for some weeks past. I now only await your Lordship's order regarding laying out the boundary to proceed at once on that duty, and also on choosing a site for a cantonment in conjunction with General Godwin. I am, My Lord,

with much respect your obedient servant,

A. P. PHAYRE.

¹ *Vide* Letter No. 29, note 1.

39

Private. Government House, June 9th, 1853.

My dear Phayre,

I have received your letter of 27th ultimo.

The dispatches have been answered and your requests have been complied with. I am solicitous regarding our intelligence department. It is the one in which the British Government in India has for long been least efficient. It is mentioned to you publicly. I allude to it again in this letter in order to say that for speedy, good, and regular intelligence I shall grudge no expense. The value of it to us with such a frontier, and in the anomalous circumstances in which we are placed, is too obvious to require comment. Major Allan¹ will seek his news in his own way; but the two channels of intelligence will serve to check and to aid each other.

I will let the ladies to Rangoon—no where else at present. This month will prove whether these people mean to reopen negotiations and sign, or not. If they do not do so within that period, I shall give up all expectation of a Treaty, and take measures for a defensive policy, capable of being converted at any time into an attack.

Yours sincerely,
DALHOUSIE.

¹ In charge of the Army Intelligence Department. On 18 May

Godwin had written to the Government of India: 'Major Allan is seeing to a steady and intelligent set of men, who will be constantly about even up to Ava, to obtain information' (*I.S.P.*, Cons. 24 June 1853, No. 40).

40

Rangoon, June 6th, 1853.

My Lord,

I received on the 31st Ult. your Lordship's letters of the 21st and 23d of May. I still think it not improbable that the Envoy may return; but with reference to the supposition that the Burmese might be willing to acquiesce in our retaining Meeaday and Toungoo, that could only be, I think, by an entire silence being observed relative to any boundary or possession of ours on the Irrawaddy. Undoubtedly, as your Lordship has observed, the King would have no less objection to sign the general admission (with schedule attached), than he had to the formal cession of the territory. It is indeed by no means improbable that, if he were to sign such a treaty, he would be set aside by the Kanoung Prince.

By the next steamer I will transmit to your Lordship a sketch map showing how the boundary will run, as far, that is, as it can now be shown, without actual survey of the country. As the line is to run six miles North of Meeaday, the boundary at Toungoo, it is proposed should be about 26 miles North of the city. That is at a stream which forms the northern boundary of the Toungoo district. Had the boundary $6\frac{1}{2}$ miles North of Prome been adopted, the line at Toungoo would have been made to run as nearly as possible from 6 to 8 miles North of the city. This could only have been done by making a line of Pillars; at least as far as my present information goes. I have applied for instructions relative to actually marking off the boundary which might be done by an Officer of the Quarter Master General's Department with an escort. When I wrote my minute on the boundary dated 2d April 1852, I supposed that the Toungoo district extended much farther to the North than I now believe it does. I believe it to be at the utmost thirty miles beyond the city. This will suit very well. The 6 miles North of Meeaday would of course be much to the North of that line, but the

boundary would, on reaching the hills dividing the Irrawaddy from the Sitang, run Southerly down the summit of the ridge, until it came to the stream, which now constitutes the Northern limit of the Toungoo district. This shall be shown in the sketch map I will transmit, but I trust your Lordship will remember that the map being compiled from native information, may be found very incorrect *in details*, when the country is surveyed.

The recruiting of the Pegu Light Infantry is going on here, and the people appear to be eager to enlist. I do not think it advisable altogether to exclude Talaings i.e. Peguers; though fallen as a nation I do not by any means consider them as individually cowards. I hope before long to be able to transmit to your Lordship an account of the probable revenues of most of the divisions of each district. I have been collecting information to this end.

The Commodore is still at Maulmain. I will write to General Godwin regarding our meeting the Envoy at Meeaday should he again appear. I think now also we should at once choose a cantonment, and I have written to General Godwin on this subject. I am, My Lord,

with much respect your obedient servant,

A. P. PHAYRE.

41

Private. Government House. June 13th, 1853.

My dear Phayre.

I have received your letter of 6th instant. The signing of a Treaty of Peace, without any mention made of the territory which has passed to us, is quite inadmissible. In the first place our orders are precise. We are to form a Treaty of which the basis shall be a cession by the Court of Ava of the territory we have occupied, *sine qua non*. In the next place such a Treaty would be even more worthless than the one which the Home authorities so much desire. For tho' it might be good during the reign of the present King, who really seems to desire peace, his rule is exceedingly unstable; his brother, the Kanoung Prince, is likely to supplant him any day; that Prince is warlike, and would undoubtedly take advantage of the absence of any

formal cession on the part of the Court of Ava to question our right of possession, and hostilities would be renewed. A Treaty of Peace, therefore, not containing a cession, would be no guarantee whatever of peace, and would be worse than no treaty.

I have remarked on the Tounghoo boundary officially. Five and twenty or thirty miles is quite far enough beyond Tounghoo. I would take the best boundary at a convenient distance, and disregard the actual limit of Tounghoo. General Steel, who is here, tells me that the present boundary of the Tounghoo district is considered to be 90 miles north of that city. That would be too far off for our convenience.

Your next mail will tell us whether the Envoy has returned. If he has not, I give him up; and shall proceed to take the steps I have already announced to you. I have no news to send you from hence. The rains appear to have begun with us; but very sluggishly. We have been dried up for months. The great anxiety on my mind is the selection of a healthy cantonment for the European troops; and I sincerely hope you may be able to select a fitting site.

Yours very truly,
DALHOUSIE.

42

Private. Government House. June 13th, 1853.

My dear Phayre,

Lord Ellenborough in the House of Lords¹ some time since asserted that money had been offered on the part of the Government for the *head* of Myat-toon. The same tale modified has been lately revived, and it is stated that rewards have been offered for apprehending him. The first I am very certain is false. The second I do not believe because no such offer was enjoined by the Government nor was any reported. Will you be so good as to let me know the facts, and tell me whether any reward was offered by any of the Deputy Commissioners for the capture of Myat-toon.

Yours sincerely
DALHOUSIE.

¹ Lord Ellenborough (1790-1871), a former Governor-General

(1841-6), was violently anti-Whig partly on account of the Whig attacks on his Indian administration in Parliament in February and March 1843. On his return from India after a short spell of office as First Lord of the Admiralty, he resigned with Peel in 1846. During the long years of Whig rule, which succeeded the Tory débâcle of 1846, he was a disgruntled and persistent critic of the Government in the House of Lords. Lord Dalhousie called him 'my chief assailant' (Baird, *op. cit.*, p. 195).

43

Private. Government House. June 22nd, 1853.

My dear Phayre,

I am desirous of giving some definite intelligence to the authorities in England by next mail regarding the formal termination of hostilities. It is uncertain whether the Fire Queen will return in time and perhaps equally uncertain whether the Tenasserim will do so. I send her, however, direct, that in case you should be at Rangoon, where you can give an immediate reply, she may return direct hither, on the chance of arriving in time for the mail. The dispatches tell in few words so explicitly what I want to know that I have nothing more to add. Anything that you may wish to say privately on the subject I shall be very glad to receive.

Yours very truly,
DALHOUSIE.

44

Rangoon, June 21st, 1853.

My Lord,

The last news from the capital is so pacific that the Commdore has determined to forward it at once to your Lordship by the Mozuffur. The letter of the Woongyee speaks for itself.¹ Every point in our draft of Treaty is noticed, and they appear willing to adjust each one. I can readily believe that the King dares not sign away territory. I beg to enclose for your Lordship's perusal a note I have received from Father Abbona.² I propose now to mark off our boundary, as soon as the weather will permit. I transmit under another cover a map showing the line along which it is intended the boundary shall run from the Irrawaddy to the Sitang river. The *Tsen-thay* stream, which

forms the present boundary of the Toungoo territory to the North, will, I believe, answer very well for us. There are great differences of statement as to its distance from the city of Toungoo. I believe, if we assume it to be fifty miles, it will not be too much.

We are all wondering what has become of the Fire Queen. I shall be glad when the Arakan battalion comes round, as I shall then be able to *invade* the district of Tharawaddee, which hitherto has remained quite independent. General Godwin appears in excellent spirits at the present aspect of affairs, and is most cordial in his cooperation to settle the country. If your Lordship determines on breaking up the force, I, after speaking on the subject with the General, consider that the force as noted in the accompanying memo. will be requisite. The whole of the Sitang river force had perhaps better be composed of Madras troops entirely. Their Commissariat arrangements can, I believe, be more conveniently made from Maulmain than from this. Your Lordship may consider this a large force, which I recommend. I do not, however, think it will be necessary to keep it up long. At present I should not like to see in Pegu a less force than that I have mentioned. I am,

My Lord, with much respect
your obedient servant,

A. P. PHAYRE.

Memo.

I think that when the army is broken up the following force should be kept in Pegu—

At Meeaday

and for detachments at Prome &ca.

1 European Regt.—in garrison complete.

2 Native Regts.

A Company of Artillery.

100 Troopers Irregular Cavalry.

At Toungoo

Shwe Gyeen, Sitang, and Beling.

The same force, irrespective of what may be considered requisite for Martaban and Maulmain. I presume that one Native Regt. will be sufficient for those places.

Rangoon

- 1 European Regt. in garrison.
 - 2 Native Regts. to furnish Detachments to Bassein Donabew &ca.
- A Company of Artillery.

¹ The Kyaukmaw Wungyi wrote that he arrived back at Amarapoora on the 10th of May and presented to the King the minute written by the British Commissioner on the breakdown of negotiations. The King once more emphasized his desire for peace. Orders had been issued to Burmese officers and Governors of districts on the frontier not to allow any attacks to be made on the British forces at Myede and Toungoo. English prisoners had been liberated and foreign merchants given permission to leave the country, if they so desired. (*I.S.P.*, Cons. 29 July 1853, No. 26, Annexure A.)

² *Infra*, No. 45.

45

Shway Boh Mew,¹ 2nd June, 1853.

Captain Phayre, Commissioner of Pegu, Prome.

Dear Sir,

According to my promise I have the pleasure of informing you that I arrived at this place on the 27th Ultimo, having been seventeen days on the road, although some parties did not come in for some days afterwards.

Immediately after my arrival the King called together a Council of the Princes and principal Officers of State of the Kingdom, and their conclusion, I am happy to say, was for peace. His Majesty also, in private, has repeatedly assured me of his determination to the same effect. He would have sent me down immediately, had I not been much indisposed; but in a few days I hope to come down with Mr. Spears, who [*sic*] he has sent for from Umurapoora for that purpose. He is also sending down now Messrs. Quin, Gregory, Sarkies and Tracy,² and he has further issued orders that all foreigners whatever shall be at full liberty either to leave the country, or come into it, hoping that the British will do the same in their territories.

For the great kindness and attention shewn to me, both by

yourself and General Godwin, I beg to tender my most sincere thanks, and trusting that you are both in good health, I remain,

My dear Sir, most sincerely yours,

P. ABBONA.

¹ Shwebo myo, the original home of the Alaungpaya Dynasty. Mindon had not yet ventured to take up his residence at Amarapoora.

² Quin and Tracy were liberated British prisoners of war. Gregory and Sarkies were Armenians, who had been imprisoned by Pagan Min, but were liberated by Mindon Min.

46

Private. Government House. Sunday June 26th, 1853, 10 p.m.

My dear Phayre,

I have received $\frac{1}{2}$ an hour ago your letters and dispatches by Moozuffur. They are very welcome; and, as far as my opinion and wishes are concerned, quite satisfactory. You have done quite right to raise the blockade at once.

Fire Queen was nearly lost, and got back here on 23rd with great difficulty. Tenasserim was to depart tomorrow morning. I do not like to detain her; and content myself with thus addressing you privately. The dispatches shall be answered by Moozuffur probably in 5 or 6 days. I shall break up the army; but I have *no intention of bringing away a single regiment at present*. I do not by any means think your estimate of force for the province high.

I shall probably come down at some time before the close of the year. I cannot do so at present. Wishing you joy of your improving prospects,

I remain, very truly yours,
DALHOUSIE.

47

Private. Government House. June 30th, 1853.

My dear Phayre,

Although I had only time to dispatch a few lines by Tenasserim in reply to your official letter of 21st instant, I believe they comprised everything I have to say now. I accept the

King's declaration, of course; for it is, to my mind, as good as any Treaty. I have to add that I place no confidence in either the one or the other; and regard our only security to be an adequate military strength in Pegu.

The army will be at once dissolved.¹ But not a man will be moved till the cold weather. Thereafter, and for the next year, I am willing to give 4 European regiments. I propose to raise a permanent irregular Cavalry Corps, and to be strong on the frontier in artillery, *horsed*. If all go well through 1854, probably three European Regiments will be found sufficient. On these points I have asked officially for your matured opinions. I hope all your other points will be replied to by this mail.

Believe me to be, Very truly yours,

DALHOUSIE.

¹ The army was 'dissolved' only as an Expeditionary Force. Pending permanent arrangements, it was to remain in the country in two divisions, one under the command of Brigadier-General Sir John Cheape at Promé, the other divided among several different stations under the command of Brigadier-General Sir Scudamore Winde Steele. General Godwin was recalled to resume his command in the Bengal Presidency. (*I.S.P.*, Cons. 29 July 1853, Nos. 32, 36.)

48

Private. Government House. July 4th, 1853.

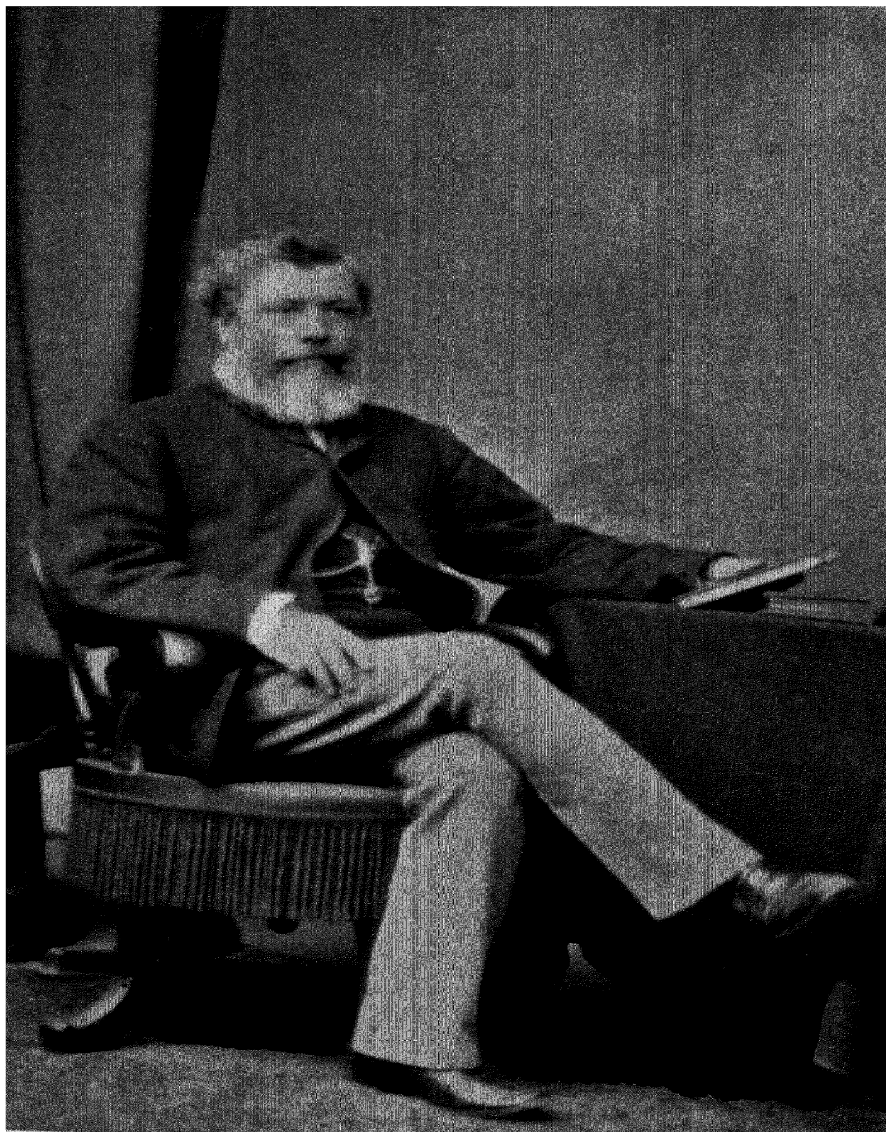
Dear Phayre,

Although opening the river to the traders from Burmah, due precautions must be taken to see that their boats do not bring down large numbers of armed men. No doubt, their retreat being cut off, they would hardly venture on any hostile expeditions in that shape; but I should fear that they might use their arms to take grain by force from villages along the river. In any case very numerous crews, or strongly armed crews, should not be permitted.

Yours in haste sincerely,

DALHOUSIE.

P.S. I have directed that all the Quarter Master General's department should remain, tho' the army is broken up. This is with a view to have the services of as many of them as possible



THOMAS SPEARS

available for marking off the boundary, fixing posts of defence, and laying down a line of communication between Meeaday and Tounghoo, which seems to me to be of first importance. I believe an official letter will say this. If not, you can act upon the knowledge I give you of my intentions. D.

49

Rangoon, July 8th, 1853.

My Lord,

With reference to your Lordship's letter dated the 13th June, regarding a reward stated to have been offered for the *head* of Myat Toon, I beg to state that the Deputy Commissioner at Rangoon did offer a reward for his apprehension, but as he did not report it to me officially, I omitted to do so to your Lordship.

I also wrote to the Deputy Comr. at Sarawah, when he was out with Sir John Cheape, to offer a similar reward to that offered for the apprehension of Myat Toon by the Deputy Comr. at Rangoon.

It was very irregular not reporting this at the time to your Lordship, and I regret exceedingly not having done so.

I can positively state that no reward was offered for the head of Myat Toon, nor in any other way or object, than is done in the case of notorious Dacoits. I am, My Lord,

with much respect your obedient servant,

A. P. PHAYRE.

50

Rangoon, July 8th, 1853.

My Lord,

By the Tenasserim I received your Lordship's letters of the 9th, 13, 22d and 26th. Regarding intelligence, I think I mentioned to your Lordship that I proposed engaging a regular correspondent at Ava. The person I thought of, a Mr. Sarkies, however will not do. I find he is so addicted to intoxication, that it would be quite unsafe to trust him.

I will take care that the Tounghoo boundary shall not be laid down too far from the city. But I think we should be careful to preserve the best of the Teak forests, if not more than fifty miles

distant. The population there is chiefly Karen, I believe, and the best defence of the frontier is that the villages are few and far between.

Regarding a Cantonment, General Godwin is strongly in favour of the Plateau on which the Fort of Meeaday stands. There is certainly no precise objection to this, unless it be that it would be better to have a small compact garrison in the Fort of Meeaday, and the bulk of the troops in the rear of them, where there is a very excellent position. The Fort of Meeaday is in the rains an island, or nearly so; and placing a large force there would render it necessary to have a bridge, to connect it with the adjoining high land. That Meeaday is a healthy position has been well proved from the troops quartered there since February last having had so few sick. The best time to test a position is during the rains, and I will take care that careful investigation is made upon this point.

The only difficulty I now experience is in the district of Tharawaddee, which from the neglect of last March and April has now become somewhat of a difficulty. From the dispatches your Lordship will see that Myat Toon is said to be there. I fear it is too true. However, the style of country will not allow him to be so formidable as he became about Donabew, and I am determined to root him out as soon as I possibly can. I hope to see the Arakan Battalion round before long.

The Revenue arrangements are now making throughout the country, and although the high price of food is rather unfavourable, yet I anticipate a very good outturn. During the rains the capitation tax and fisheries only will be assessed; and the land, salt and other items during the dry season. I am, My Lord,

your obedient servant,

A. P. PHAYRE.

51

Rangoon, July 21st, 1853.

My Lord,

I have received your Lordship's letters of the 30th June and 4th July. I will be careful that no armed men are allowed to come down by boat past our frontier.

I have not yet received any distinct reply from General

Godwin regarding marking off the boundary, but I believe it will be found in every respect better to defer doing so until after the rainy season. I will take care that the ports for defence and line of communication from Meeaday to Toungoo are laid down.

By the present mail I forward a plan for a road across the *Toungoo* Pass to Arakan, by Lieut. Forlong of the Madras Army, which I trust your Lordship will approve of.

By the next mail I will report fully what number of troops I consider necessary to be stationed from the commencement of next year.

The English merchant, Mr. Spears,¹ who was a prisoner at Ava, has reached this. He is a man of intelligence and excellent character. He states that the present King still has property of his, amounting to about Rs. 70,000. I believe he purposes going up to Calcutta to present a memorial to your Lordship on this subject. He states it would be given up at once, if a letter were to be written by me to the Woongyees. I have had more than one application from other persons upon this subject, but have declined, of course, to take any steps therein.

Mr. Spears states that he was summoned up to Shwé bo (the Motshobo myo of the maps, where the King is) and had an interview with H.M. He stated that he was anxious for a treaty, and would even be willing to sign one making over the territory now annexed, but coupled with a clause very like a Burmese plan to spin out negotiations. It was that he would agree to pay within a fixed period, say two years, any sum which might be mentioned such as he could not possibly pay, and that if the sum be not paid within that time, the whole territory to be forfeited to the British Government. The object, as hinted or avowed in this extraordinary proposal, was for the King to save his honor, and to show that he done his best to avert the disgrace of seperating [*sic*] Pegu from the Burmese Empire. Or, he said, Pegu proper could be signed away, and the remainder be held on the same terms by the British Government for a fixed time, in case a sum to be named was not paid by him. I only mention these messages to your Lordship as they are delivered, knowing that any such proposition is totally inadmissible.

I should wish to have your Lordship's orders as to the advisability of employing Mr. Spears as a confidential correspondent at Ava. He appears to me well suited from his intelligence and character for the purpose. As he will proceed to Calcutta, your Lordship will be able to hear more of him there.

The intelligence, which will be conveyed by this steamer regarding Mozuffur, is very disastrous;² but the latest reports state that there is great probability of her being saved. Commodore Lambert sails immediately. I have always received from him every assistance, which it was in his power to give, and I feel grateful for it.

I know not if your Lordship ever heard of a Frenchman named D'Orgoni,³ who came to Rangoon. About a month or so ago he left this to go into the interior, and it now appears he told no one of his intentions, but taking all his property went in rather a suspicious manner. News has now reached me that he is supposed to have gone to Tharawaddy, and that he has had communications with Myat Toon and has passed up to Ava. I shall take measures to ascertain the truth of this. I am, My Lord,

with much respect, your obedient servant,

A. P. PHAYRE.

From Mr. Spears' account it would appear that Father Abbona strongly urged the King to sign any treaty offered; that the King was much influenced by the Father, and would have sent back the Woongyee for the purpose. A party at Court adverse to the Revd. Father represented that the Note delivered in by the Comrs. (No. 1 d. 10th May 1853)⁴ contained a guarantee against any advance to Ava, and therefore that a treaty was not required to save them. The party, of which one of the Armenians was a leader, wished, it is said, to involve Father Abbona in a scrape, representing that he was devoted to the English.

¹ Thomas Spears, the writer of seventy-nine of the letters in this collection. Laurie (*Pegu*, p. 345) is in error in calling him 'Mr. Speirs, formerly Captain of a vessel at Rangoon'. He muddles him with a Commander William Spiers (N.B. different spelling of name) of the Royal Navy, who owned a large brick dwelling house and godowns in Rangoon, which were destroyed by the Burmese at the time of Com-

modore Lambert's blockade of the port. Spiers's attorney, Hugh Brown of Moulmein, claimed Rs.10,000 compensation in respect of this outrage. (*I.S.P.*, Cons. 29 Dec. 1852, No. 104.) *Vide* Introduction, § 5.

Thomas Spears also had owned a godown in Rangoon before the war (*vide* Letter No. 168, P.S.).

² On her way from Akyab to Rangoon she ran ashore 12 miles east of Elephant Point.

³ D'Orgoni: Lee Warner (*Life of Dalhousie*, ii, pp. 30-3) gives some account of this adventurer.

⁴ *Vide* Letter No. 34, note 1.

52

Private. Government House, August 1st, 1853.

My dear Phayre,

I have received your letter of 21st ultimo. The loss of Moozuffur is a very great misfortune, and a fresh annoyance to me: which was not necessary; there having been annoyances more than enough from the Gulf of Martaban already. The demarcation of the boundary can be well postponed. I do not think it will be well to make claims for merchants on Ava now. We have taken Pegu in full of all claims, and if we allow any such we must meet them ourselves.

The King's proposals to Mr. Spiers are nonsense. At first sight I doubt the expediency of employing Mr. S. as a correspondent at Ava. His being so could hardly be kept secret. If it were known, he would be liable to outrage; and if outraged, he would, from his quasi-official character and his British birth, be of more importance than another might be; and so would be more likely to involve this Government in responsibilities.

I fear that the Tharawaddy will give us trouble. Indeed I do not think you will be able to get on without a more organized military police than you have contemplated, or at least have yet mentioned. I conceive that the several brigades should be kept at their stations *unbroken* by detachments; that the local corps should take the outpost frontier work, and that all work requiring armed men should be done by a military police, partially trained and well armed.

I feel the slowness of communication on those details across the sea very irksome—and I think it probable that if all is quiet

here, and I can get away, I shall come down to Rangoon in the middle of September for a short time. By all means give Bandoola a 100 Rs. a month—make him earn it if you can. I will let you know my plans more precisely, if they are likely to be executed. If I come, people need not be afraid—I shall not give them any trouble. I shall come for work, and I shall attend exclusively to that. There is not time to answer all your dispatches by this mail.

Yours sincerely,
DALHOUSIE.

P.S. Answer about the force for Pegu by the next mail; for it presses.

53

Rangoon, August 2d, 1853.

My Lord,

I have no news of any importance to communicate by this mail. I have replied to the dispatch regarding the force required, both at the close of the monsoon, and hereafter to hold Pegu. I trust what I have recommended will be approved by your Lordship. I consider that *three* European Regiments will be sufficient, even at the close of this year.

Your Lordship will probably see an account in the Rangoon Chronicle of the proceedings of the Steamer Nerbudda in one of the rivers in the district of Tharawaddy. I send up the official account by Captain Smith the Deputy Commissioner, and believe the published account to be quite fabulous.¹ I have, however, sent it to Captain Smith and called upon him to state distinctly whether the steamer fired on women and children as implied in the newspaper account. The result will be communicated to your Lordship.

The points, which I am anxious to receive early orders regarding, are, the road across the Toungoop Pass, with the electric Telegraph, and the survey of the Province. I am sure that if these works are commenced at once, or as soon as the season will allow, they will very much conduce to the prosperity of the Province. Regarding the making of the road, there is an Officer of the Madras service here, Captain Campbell, who, I think,

might very properly be employed upon it, should your Lordship approve of him. He has formerly been employed in road making in the Madras Presidency. I am, My Lord,

with much respect your obedient servant,

A. P. PHAYRE.

¹ The *Rangoon Chronicle*, the first English newspaper in Rangoon, made its first appearance on the 5th of January 1853. Regarding it Laurie (*Pegu*, p. 248) quotes the *Friend of India's* statement: 'There are two attendants which invariably follow the path of Anglo-Saxon conquest,—the press and taxation'. This paper published passages in its issue of Wednesday, 27 July 1853, accusing Captain Smith, the Deputy-Commissioner of Sarawah, of burning villages and slaying women and children in his recent river operations against the dacoit Nga Gaung Gyi. Smith in his official report stated that numerous bands of robbers had issued out of Tharawaddy under Gaung Gyi's orders to cut off British Commissariat boats on the Irrawaddy and plunder merchant boats. The steamboat *Nerbudda* had put a stop to this by operations in which 'we destroyed the upper town of Tsayman, as well as the whole of the village of Dwott'. (*I.S.P.*, Cons. 26 Aug. 1853, No. 28.) Lord Dalhousie on hearing of it expressed his 'extreme regret and disapprobation' at the burning of the villages, which, he said, was 'at variance with the practice of the British Government' (*ibid.*, No. 29). On inquiry, however, into the accusation of slaying women and children, it turned out that the total Burmese casualties were two men killed and one woman accidentally wounded (*I.S.P.*, Cons. 30 Sept. 1853, Nos. 9, 10). Lord Dalhousie therefore acquitted the Deputy Commissioner of the more serious aspersion cast upon him by the *Rangoon Chronicle* (*ibid.*, No. 13).

54

Private. Government House, August 16th, 1853.

My dear Phayre,

In none of your letters public or private have you said anything about the great scarcity of food, which is said to prevail in Pegu. I would, therefore, fain hope that the accounts, which are given, are in a great degree exaggerated. In most cases, and in most countries, the remedy for such a state of things is best left in the hands of private traders. But in the present case it is possible that the aid and interposition of the Government would be beneficial. If so, we must rely upon you to suggest any such measure as you may think would be advantageous: for, in

ignorance of the real state of local want, it is impossible for the Government here to devise any appropriate mode of relief.

I remain, yours very truly,

DALHOUSIE.

55

Private. Government House, August 16th, 1853.

My dear Phayre,

I have received your letter of 2nd instant. I am prepared to give 4 European regiments for the present, instead of the 3 which you ask for: but I am anxious to hold the troops as much together as possible, especially on the frontier. I intend to raise a strong corps of horse so as to have a wing at Meeaday, and another at Tounghoo, and to be strong in artillery. Captain Smith's 'burning and slaying' proceedings have annoyed me very greatly setting aside the exaggerations of the local newspapers. This destruction of property is not justifiable in itself; it is impolitic; and moreover it raises a great public clamour on the banks of the Thames, which cannot be disregarded even on the distant banks of the Irrawaddy.

The road across the Tounghoop pass has been sanctioned. You name Captain Campbell for it. Why should not Lieut. Forlong himself be employed? Or better still why should not both? The road, however, must be made on proper principles. For the reasons given I think that the proper line for the first telegraph is from Prome to Rangoon. Dr. O'Shaughnessy¹ is expected here very soon, and I will endeavour to get it set on foot. It is right, however, I should add that the stock of materials and men may not admit of so early a commencement. I beg you to communicate with Major Fraser about the road, so that no time shall be lost.

Captain Nuthall seems to be making very slow progress with his enlisting, and, as far as I can make out, has taken no measures for trying to get recruits at Bassein or Tounghoo or elsewhere. This is a pity; for I cannot retain the Sikhs indefinitely.

Believe me to be, Yours sincerely,

DALHOUSIE.

¹ Dr. W. B. O'Shaughnessy, Professor of Chemistry in the Medical

College, Calcutta. Selected by Dalhousie to introduce the electric telegraph into India, he linked up Calcutta with Kedjeri, a distance of 80 miles, in 1852. On account of opposition at home, Lord Dalhousie sent O'Shaughnessy to England to persuade the home authorities to sanction the construction of telegraphic communication from Calcutta to Agra, thence to Peshawar and Bombay, and from Bombay to Madras. On his return after a successful mission O'Shaughnessy was appointed Superintendent of Electric Telegraphs in India, and by the end of Dalhousie's term of office, had set up about 4,000 miles of telegraph at a cost of £217,000. Shortly before Dalhousie's return to England O'Shaughnessy was deputed to proceed to Europe and America to study the latest telegraphic methods. As a result of this he was able to introduce the Morse system into the Indian Telegraph Department before the outbreak of the Mutiny.

56

Rangoon, Aug. 15th, 1853.

My Lord,

I have not yet mentioned, though for some time past I have anticipated that it will be advisable to do, that the districts of Bassein, of Sarawah, and of Prome, will each require an additional Assistant. I should propose a salary of 400 Rs. a month and 50 Rs. boat allowance for each. I have not mentioned this until I have become convinced of the necessity of doing so.

Should your Lordship approve of this I will forward the proposition. One of them should be stationed at Donebew in Sarawah. One at Pantanau in Bassein, and one at or near Meeaday in the Prome district. I am, My Lord,

your obedient servant,

A. P. PHAYRE.

57

Rangoon, Aug. 15th, 1853.

My Lord,

I received your Lordship's letter of the 1st inst. by Tenasserim. Mr. Spears will go up by this steamer to Calcutta. There certainly will be inconvenience in having him as a correspondent—that is, the Govt. might be involved thereby in responsibilities. I do not know how to avoid this difficulty. There was up nearly to the time of the war, I believe, a 'Port Master' maintained at Rangoon by our Govt.; and I have understood the

Burmese Officials, knowing that he held office, were particularly careful not to molest him. Up at Ava they might be more daring. I am somewhat puzzled as to who I should engage as a correspondent. I consider it essential that we should have one, and messengers be sent up occasionally to bring his dispatches. I purpose leaving this for Prome the day after tomorrow, when I will endeavour to arrange this.

I go up mainly to consult with Sir John Cheape regarding Tharawaddee and, indeed, the whole country up to Meeaday. In consequence of nothing having been done during February March and April last, a number of Chiefs have gained great influence, and it will now require some force to do what would have been easy then. I feel certain that it is desirable not to attempt to march inland from the river at present, but to wait until the season admits of the troops moving, and the cavalry following up all who offer opposition. I think one or two or more detachments of regular troops stationed in stockades will be useful. They cannot be required to remain for many months, and once the country is quieted it may be left without these detachments. The Arakan Battn. will be very useful for such work—and the Pegu Lt. Inf. too, I hope, in six months; so that I have not contemplated any further armed Police. The cavalry I have great faith in against the Burmese. In short, My Lord, the difficulties, which do certainly appear, would never have existed, had General Godwin not been so obstinate in refusing all aid.¹ However, the work shall be done effectually as soon as the season allows. Sir J. Cheape is anxious to do all he can, and requested me to come up and consult with him. I shall be back here soon, in case your Lordship should arrive.

I am afraid poor Bandoola can scarcely be employed under us in any regular appointment. He has not business habits, but he is, and will be, very useful to consult in all matters regarding intercourse with the Burmese Court and the people about it. He is as honest as an Asiatic can be.

I should wish to be informed if I shall prepare a residence for your Lordship. I am, My Lord,

with much respect your obedient servant,

A. P. PHAYRE.

¹ *Vide* Letter No. 30, note 1.

58

Private. Government House, August 30th, 1853.

My dear Phayre,

I have received your two letters of August 15th. If more assistants are necessary for the transaction of business, and if you are prepared to state that you have well assured yourself of the necessity of the increase, of course the Government will accede to it. There can be no doubt of the soundness of your views, that it is better not to attempt to act against these freebooters, until the season admits of your acting with full effect.

I think you are wrong regarding police, and that you will do nothing effectual for the permanent maintenance of the *internal* tranquillity of the province, till a police both for district and river shall have been organised. I quite assent to your belief that all this difficulty might have been obviated, and indeed never would have existed, but for the wrong-headed views of your late commander. Pension Bundoola, if he is fit for nothing else.

My coming to Rangoon will depend upon the next news from Europe. If they promise peace, I shall probably be at Rangoon soon after 20th September. I repeat that on every account I wish that no fuss shall be made. A house to live in, of course, I must have; either that which I had before, or General Godwin's. I suppose they are not both occupied. It is probable General Steel will be relieved by that time; in which case I can have my former quarters. In any case you shall *hear from me again* timeously [*sic*] before I arrive.

I am very anxious to see you on several points as well as General Cheape. I am extremely displeased with Captain Latter. For months past I have received thro' the Military Commander letters from him containing 'authentic' intelligence of attacks from Ava, particularised with the utmost speciality as to amount, date, and direction. One is now before me, in which he states that unless his advice is immediately acted upon, 'the country will be ravaged to the walls of Rangoon'. Whatever Captain Latter's personal courage may be—and nobody doubts it—he does as much mischief by such incendiary gossip as this—nay more mischief—than could be effected by the most arrant coward in the same situation. Many of his predictions have

already been falsified. I will give him fair time, and if no foundation is shewn—as I believe none exists—for this one, I shall most certainly remove Captain Latter from his charge. Whether another charge can be found I do not know: but a man such as this upon a frontier eternally crying ‘Wolf’ is a public nuisance, and must be removed as such, whatever may become of him.

I have not yet seen Mr. Spiers [*sic*], but hope to do so in a few days.

Believe me to be, Yours very truly,
DALHOUSIE.

59

Rangoon, August 31st, 1853.
9 p.m.

My Lord,

I arrived this morning from Prome and received your Lordship’s letter of the 16th inst. I am not able to transmit my dispatches regarding affairs up the river, but will send them by the Berenice on the 10th Sept. The Banditti of Tharawaddi have been very active and have been crossing to the West bank of the Irrawaddy in large numbers, to coerce the people and Head men there who would not join them. Sir J. Cheape detached a party of the 67th Regt. N.I. to Kyangheng (Kyan Khan on the map) and some 700 men crossed over and landed below Kyan-gheng on the 14th. The boats in which they crossed were for the most part destroyed by the Indus Steamer—but they burnt a part of Kyan-gheng and got off in spite of the detachment. I have now posted detachments at Myanounng, which is an important town on the West bank a few miles below Kyangheng—and two Comps. of the Arakan Battalion are at Kanounng below Myanounng. I know that your Lordship is not favourable to detachments, but it is absolutely necessary to protect these towns from pillage, and if they were not so protected, the men from Tharawaddi would be over again. The only real method of stopping these outrages is by a march into Tharawaddi itself—but that cannot be done now; and to go by a rush to the head quarters of the man, named Ngakhounng-gyee [Nga Gaung Gyi], who heads these robbers, and then leave the place, would be doing more

harm than good. I therefore objected to a proposal to march to the place, unless it could be held and the robbers followed up. This can only be done properly after the rains. I am leaving this again early tomorrow morning to proceed to the Southern end of the Tharawaddi district, when two more companies of the Arakan Battn. will be posted. That portion of the country will no doubt be troublesome, but I feel confident that I see my way to bring it into order, as soon as the season admits. Captain Nuthall has certainly not got more than 200 recruits, but he could not go to Bassein, or leave the men he had here, without danger of their being unskilfully managed by young Officers. I brought down 11 men with me for him from Henzada. I feel assured he will give your Lordship satisfaction. I have witnessed the great pains he has taken with the men he has enlisted.

Regarding the scarcity of grain—it was at one time very bad indeed—I believe I mentioned it in one of my private letters to Mr. Allen; but I did not mention it to your Lordship, because I did not think the crisis called for the interference of Government. I anticipated that rice would be brought from Bengal, and about 80,000 bags have been introduced up to this time. But the difficulty is to have it conveyed up to Prome, where it is most required; for the state of the river, as above described, renders it difficult, even with a convoy or escort, to take up safely a long line of Native boats. Some has been sent up in the Govt. Flats, but the Commissariat Officer here stated that this department could not do without the whole tonnage of the flats. Two convoys of boats have been sent off to escort rice during August, and I feel convinced that if we can only protect the merchants on the river, there will be plenty of rice brought from Bengal. Just now indeed there is a cargo in the river, which cannot be sold in consequence of a temporary glut in the market. I am happy to say that I found a great improvement in the rice market at Prome, and, though scarce, it was not at starvation price. I shall continue to afford convoys to the Merchants boats, and I feel assured that for the present at least no further aid is required.

I regret exceedingly the burning of the villages; Captain Smith's own account, in reply to the statement in the newspaper, I will forward by the Berenice.

Lieut. Forlong has requested me to name him for the survey of the Province, which I will do eventually, should your Lordship approve of the survey being made. I think it would be very desirable. I did not name Lt. Forlong for the road, because I understood, though not from himself, that he preferred returning to his own appointment in Madras. I feel assured now, however, that he will set about this work with great zeal. I will at once communicate on the subject with Major Fraser.

I expect to return to Rangoon again in four days. I am, My Lord,

with much respect your obedient servant,

A. P. PHAYRE.

60

Private. Government House. September 17th, 1853.

My dear Phayre,

The last intelligence from Europe, tho' mending, was still so little positive, that I have not felt justified in quitting the Presidency at this moment. The next mail will, I hope, bring more decided news of peace, and in that case I will fulfil my plan and come down in Zenobia 3 or 4 days after the mail arrives. If I should not be able to come, you shall receive intimation, so that your movements need not be hampered.

I shall be very happy to nominate Mr. Forlong to the survey. It should be a rough and general one at first. Of course detachments at present can't be avoided; and I think you are right in not doing anything aggressive in Tharawaddie till the season admits of it; but I am much disconcerted by the handle which the condition of that district gives to lies everywhere. The G.O. constituting Pegu a single division goes down by Tenasserim.

Yours very truly,

DALHOUSIE.

61

Rangoon, September 10th, 1853.

My Lord,

The scarcity of food, which did prevail in this Province, has been entirely removed by large importations from Bengal.

A quantity left this a few days ago for Prome in one of the Flats, and I am now arranging a convoy of boats, which will convey there from 6 to 8,000 bags. The sowings of rice have during the rains been extensive. The early crops may be expected to be ripe in November, and until then there is now, I think, sufficient grain to prevent any suffering in the country.

The news from Ava is generally to the effect that they are preparing for war—or rather to attack us. I know that this intention is fully believed by Sir J. Cheape and by Captain Latter. I do not think they will make any open attack. I have received news of an Armenian at Ava, one Mr. Jacobs, who might be an useful correspondent. I have sent for him to see what sort of a person he is, and will engage him, if I approve of him.

I have written to push on the Toungoop road in the plains as fast as possible. This can be done at once.

I am sending up the report from Captain Nuthall on the progress he has made in recruiting. I trust it will be satisfactory to your Lordship. I think he has been very careful in all that he has done, and has made as much progress as could have been expected.

I returned to Rangoon from Prome on the 6th inst. Nga Khoung Gyee is making strenuous efforts from Tharawaddee to annoy our people on the West bank of the Irrawaddy. We now have a line of forts along that part of the river, and, I consider, must restrict ourselves to that mode of defence until the end of the rains, when we must hunt him out. I have asked your Lordship for the power of carrying out a sentence of death on persons found in arms against the British authority in Prome and Sarawah. The former authority to carry out sentences seems to refer to those found in the commitment of certain crimes. I think persons found in opposition to the authorities with arms in their hands should be made liable to death. I am, My Lord,

with much respect your obedient servant,

A. P. PHAYRE.

Private. Government House, September 18th, 1853.

My dear Phayre,

I received your letter of 10th by Berenice last evening. As yet I have not seen all your dispatches. The intelligence of the

Armenian¹ has been sent home. It is not redolent of war: nor in my opinion are the other depositions,² in the *facts* they state, or otherwise than in vague assertion, which are not corroborated, even where not directly contradicted by their facts.

I am glad to hear the pressure for food has been relieved. Good intelligence is especially valuable to me, when pestered with the gossiping panics of officers on our own frontier. Pay, therefore, whatever may be liberal. It might perhaps tend to ensure trustworthy news to give a fixed salary, and to say that at the end of each year a further sum will be given, if, during the course of it, intelligence of all public events shall have been given, *regular*, EARLY and CORRECT.

Believe me to be, Yours very truly,
DALHOUSIE.

¹ Johannes Sarkies, who reported that there were in Burma no preparations of a hostile character; that Mindon had refused to see Mya Tun; that the Kyaukmaw Mingyi was anxious for peace and exerted a decisive influence upon policy. He also mentioned that he had seen d'Orgoni at Shwebo; that the latter had applied to Mindon for service stating that he knew various sciences and was a mechanic, but that the King was not inclined to receive him. (*I.S.P.*, Cons. 30 Sept. 1853, No. 23.)

² Phayre had enclosed with his official letters of 1 and 10 Sept. the depositions of some five persons who had come from Shwebo or Amarapoora.

63

Rangoon, October 7th, 1853.

My Lord,

As I expected that your Lordship would arrive here about this time, I did not write by the last steamer. I have now nothing of importance to report except the arrival from Shwé boh of the Revd. Father Abbona with a letter from the Burmese Envoy, asking permission for Persons to come down and visit the Pagodas of Prome, Rangoon and Pegu to make the usual offerings from the King. I am convinced, My Lord, that this will be made the means of disturbing men's minds, of communicating with the disaffected in Tharawaddee, and of thereby making the settlement of the country more difficult. I am happy to say that the last accounts show that matters on the West side of the

Irrawaddy are very much improved, but this visit might throw all back again. I, however, have not replied to the letter, and shall not do so until the 10th inst., by which time your Lordship may have arrived here, and I shall receive your orders on the matter.

Father Abbona was with me this morning when he delivered the letter. I expressed to him my doubts of being able to comply with the application. He replied, I think it my duty to be plain with you and to say that, if this is not complied with, the King will certainly go to war. I said, of course H.M. can do as he pleases, but you are of course aware who would be the greatest loser in case of another war.

The ground, on which I put the doubt of compliance with the application, was this: as reported in my letter No. 48 dated 1st Sept., a man in our employ named Moungh Pau Den was forcibly carried off into Tharawaddee. There is credible evidence that he has been sent up to the Capital, and I told Father Abbona that we could not admit these persons with Royal offerings, until that man was restored, or some explanation given as to his alleged captivity in the Burmese territory.

I have reported the message and letter, but have not deemed it necessary to say further at present, as the matter is still in abeyance, and your Lordship may arrive to give orders. If I think I can properly controul these Pilgrims—and convey them down by steamer—so that there shall be no intrigue, I will not object to their coming. But I know that, while the Envoy was at Prome, all kind of intrigue went on. If our country were settled, no harm could ensue; but in the present state of things, it is not desirable that any facility should be given to such undermining. I trust your Lordship will approve generally of my views. If I feel I can keep controul of these Persons, I will admit them. If I think I cannot, I will state that some explanation must be given regarding Moungh Pau Den, who is a British subject, and stated to be in captivity within the Burmese territory, before they can be admitted. The time, when they want to make the offerings, is about the end of October.

My accounts from Captain Smith regarding Tharawaddee are that symptoms are beginning to appear of the head men of villages wishing to make their peace. I do not look forward to

any real difficulty in settling that country. I have not entered on the question of a Police because I looked forward, and still hope to hear your Lordship's own views on the subject, and I shall then have the advantage of representing what occurs to me therein.

By this steamer I have forwarded up various revenue statements of districts under the Burmese rule and for the three months of 1852/53. I have all the revenue in train for 1853/54, but am careful not to push it too far towards the North. Distress did prevail, and here and there it does still; but I have sent large quantities of rice up the Irrawaddy, and another fleet of boats is now preparing. I am, My Lord,

with much respect your obedient servant,

A. P. PHAYRE.

I believe I shall give up nearly all the Sitang valley, which Colonel Bogle asked for, except the portion at Toungoo; only one or two points remain for inquiry.

64

Private. Government House, October 16th, 1853.

My dear Phayre,

I received your letter of 7th instant three hours ago, and as Zenobia sails for Rangoon tomorrow morning at daybreak, I have demi-officially consulted with my colleagues, and convey to you at once instructions; which, though demi-official in form, are to be regarded as entirely official in fact, and they will be made so.

I am decidedly opposed to granting permission for the performance of pilgrimages and the offering of gifts by the King of Ava to the Pagodas of Prome, Rangoon, and Pegu, under *present circumstances and at the present time*. Father Abbone's declaration, that if permission be refused, war will be renewed by the King, has no weight with me whatever. Nothing will prevent the Burmese making renewed war against us, except the consciousness of their inability to do so. If they fancy that they are able to make war now, they will do so, even tho' we grant their request. For, not obtaining a pretext in the refusal of their

request, they will speedily find another pretext. If on the other hand they do not feel themselves able to make war, the refusal of the request will not be followed by war. Wherefore I hold that war or peace is a question which stands quite independent of this request; for if they are disposed for war, they will make it, even tho' the request be conceded; and if they are not prepared to make war, they cannot make it, even tho' the request be refused.

It remains to consider whether the request should be granted on its own merits. I think most certainly not. The Burmese have made no formal cession of Pegu to us. Whatever they may *do*, it is certain they must desire to recover it. It is therefore most probable that this offer of gifts is designed to afford opportunities for intrigue, and to maintain in the eyes of the people of Pegu a claim to that province, and an avowed expectation that they will yet recover it. Any thing of this sort (apart from active intrigue), which is calculated to keep alive hope among the Burmans of their recovering Pegu, and doubt among the Peguers of our retaining it, is likely to be most mischievous.

If the Burmese had signed a Treaty, formally and publicly ceding Pegu for ever to us, there would not have been the same objection to permitting them to send gifts to Pagodas in our territory, just as foreign states have long been accustomed to send gifts to Benares, Gaya, and Juggernath in these Provinces. I would, therefore, wish you peremptorily to refuse to permit any royal pilgrimage or the offer of any royal gifts to temples in Pegu, *until the Treaty already offered shall be signed by the King*. This is the answer which you must give. And you may tell Father Abbone from me, that he may tell it to the King, that I swear solemnly that if the Burmese nation renews war with us, I shall hold myself free to utterly destroy the Burman Kingdom, and to hunt down the race that rules over it, till I make them beggars upon the face on [*sic*] the earth.

The successive mails from Europe have brought such uncertain tidings of the Russian dispute, that I have not felt myself warranted in leaving the Presidency. Unfortunately another obstacle has arisen in the miserable assassination of Colonel Mackeson at Peshawur,¹ which has created an alarm among our own people, wholly uncalled for, but still such as to make it

expedient for me to be here. This is subsiding. The Russian question appears, by the mail received yesterday, to be in a good way, and I shall hope to get down early in November. Meantime I send down Zenobia with the rest of the Fusiliers and must of course await her return. There is so poor a spirit apparently among your community (in which you bear no share), that I shall probably plan for this year a fifth European regiment at Moulmein. I am doing my very best to get Cavalry, but it is not easy and very *dear*. However they shall be got.

You say you wait for my views as to Police. The details I am of course incompetent to give, and I look to you for them. The general view I hold is, that obviously (for the present at least) you cannot do in Pegu without police, as you do in Arracan and Tenasserim. An organised district police, and above all an organised and powerful river police, reinforced at points by gunboats, and all capable of dealing effectively with these dacoits, or guerillas, or insurgents, or invaders, or whatever they are, that are creating so much alarm among you, is to my mind an indispensable necessity; which so far as the facts before me show has not been supplied anywhere, except by Bogle on the Sitang. Do not fear the expense. Peace externally I hope for; but submission and order internally I must have, and at whatever cost. All this we should settle together in a week, whereas we shall write about it for a year.

It gives me pleasure to afford you the gratification which I know you will feel in learning, that I have appointed your friend Mr. Colvin² to be Lieut. Governor of Agra, in the room of Mr. Thomason,³ whose loss we have been lamenting.

Believe me to be, Yours sincerely,

DALHOUSIE.

¹ Colonel Mackeson, C.B., Commissioner of Peshawar, had been stabbed while at work in his office by a religious fanatic who approached him ostensibly to present a petition.

² James Russel Colvin of the Bengal Civil Service (1807-57) was the second son of James Colvin of the firm of Colvin & Co., Calcutta. Educated at St. Andrews, Fifeshire, until nearly 15, he later entered Haileybury College. In 1826 he went to India and passed through the Fort William College with credit. He became assistant to the Registrar of the Sudder Court (William Macnaghten, later assassinated in the Afghan War), and was later assistant to William Byam Martin, when

Resident at Hyderabad. In 1832 he was appointed to one of the newly created Assistant-Secretaryships—that of the Revenue and Judicial Department at Calcutta. In 1836 he became for a short time Secretary to the Board of Revenue in the Lower Provinces of Bengal, but in March left that office to become Private Secretary to Lord Auckland, over whose Afghan policy he is said to have exerted much influence. After a period of furlough in England (1842–5) he became successively Resident in Nepaul (1845–6), Commissioner of the Tenasserim Provinces (1846–8), and Judge of the Sudder Court, Calcutta. When in 1853 he was appointed Lieut.-Governor of the North-West Provinces (capital Agra) he had a huge reputation for hard work and force of character. In this post he developed what amounted to a mania for details, and when the Mutiny broke out in 1857 his tremendous, but abortive, exertions to save his province resulted in his death. His son, later Sir Auckland Colvin, K.C.M.G., C.I.E., also became Lieut.-Governor of the North-West Provinces. (*Vide D.N.B.*, and Laurie, *Distinguished Anglo-Indians*.)

³ James Thomason, the 'big collector', like his successor, Colvin, died from over-work. He was about to be transferred to the Governorship of Madras.

65

Rangoon, October 20th, 1853.

My Lord,

The latest accounts I have from the disturbed portions of the country extend up to the 15th of Octr. The river, which was unsafe for boats, is now quite clear of the marauders; and it is probable that when we do enter Tharawaddee after the rains are over, there will be very little opposition.

Expecting that your Lordship would have arrived at Rangoon ere this, I have not before sent any proposal as regards Police. I now beg to do so. I feel assured, My Lord, that what I propose, as regards village Goungs,¹ will be found the true Police system for Pegu. It is that which has always prevailed, and I think we cannot with safety abandon it. It may not, however, be absolutely necessary for more than a few years.

The Irregular Cavalry corps, which your Lordship once mentioned, would be invaluable; with that the Pegu Lt. Infantry and (for a time) the Arakan Battalion, I feel that no Police beyond the village Goungs and Constables I have mentioned will be required. Indeed no other Police would be efficient for the country.

I transmit by this mail the reply I made to the application from the Woongyee, that the bearers of royal offerings to the Pagodas might be admitted. I trust your Lordship will approve of the refusal, and of the assigned reason in the reply. If it should be considered proper to grant them entrance hereafter, it can be done by carrying them in a steamer. At present, however, I feel certain that the appearance of such a royal party would only excite doubts and dismay in the minds of our people.

I am taking measures regarding the land revenue. The early rice crops are already being reaped. The principal harvest, however, is during December and January, when the land will be assessed. The scarcity, which did exist for a time, more in Prome than elsewhere, has entirely passed away. Rice, everywhere within our territory, is plentiful. The sowings of rice in the delta have been extensive, and I feel assured the harvest will be plentiful. I see that both in the Indian and English newspapers various difficulties are foretold as sure to arise in Pegu from internal and external causes. My firm conviction is that in the ensuing cold season, when we shall have done what has not been done yet, that is, shown our Military force in the country, and adopted the suggestions I have ventured to make as regards Police &ca., we shall have a quiet country, and our friends above are too conscious of their own weakness to venture hostilities. My Messenger to Ava I have not yet heard from. I would again venture to bring to your Lordship's notice, that having a person like Mr. Spears as a correspondent out at Ava would have many advantages. He certainly should not conceal from the Court that he was in communication with me, officially. I think he would be respected, and not having the rank of a Resident or other High Agent for the British Government, there would be the less chance of jealousy towards him. Mr. Spears is a shrewd man, and with his knowledge of the country and the Court at Ava would make an excellent correspondent.

I believe the King proposes to come down to Amarapoora before long. This certainly indicates a sense of security and a wish for peace.

A great deal has been said lately about the upper Provinces not being dependant [*sic*] on the lower for rice. I think it will be found that the whole country, from Prome up to about

Pugan, is chiefly dependent on the delta for rice. About the Capital they can no doubt procure it from the valleys of the Khyen-dweng [Chindwin] river.

I think it will be found advisable to establish a custom house at or above Toungoo, as well as Meeaday. From information I have, it appears that a good deal of salt, ngapee, &ca. goes that way. I am, My Lord,

with much respect your obedient servant,

A. P. PHAYRE.

¹ The Goung (headman of a number of families or a small village) performed certain police functions under the superintendence of the Myothugyi, in Burmese local administration.

66

Rangoon, Oct. 23rd, 1853.

My Lord,

I have no intelligence to give beyond what I had the honour to send by the Fire Queen. I believe that we shall have less difficulty in clearing out Tharawaddee than what I even anticipated. I do hope my plan of police will be approved.

Your Lordship once mentioned that the Seikh regiment could not be kept here much longer. I see no obstacle to its being relieved or withdrawn in March.

I am anxious to have the new cantonment fixed, before any of the relieving regiments arrive. I have written several times to Sir John Cheape on the subject but cannot get a distinct reply. I still hold to it that a position near Meeaday is the best we could have. There is one about two miles below Meeaday on the East bank of the river, and one on the West bank about five miles distant, either of which would do. Sir John thinks that our Magazines should not be so near the frontier. I confess I think that just about there is the place to have a strong force. Our principal Magazines, no doubt, must always be at Rangoon. I am, My Lord,

with much respect your obedient servant,

A. P. PHAYRE.

67

Private. Government House. November 2nd, 1853.

My dear Phayre,

I have received your letters of 20th and 23rd ultimo. Zenobia who is just anchoring (only 4 days neat from Rangoon) may bring something more. I am rejoiced that you have refused entrance to the mission with gifts for the Pagodas.¹ You will receive on that head full and precise instructions by this mail. I rejoice too in the gradual return of order, and do not doubt the correctness of your anticipations regarding the effect of a march through Tharawaddee. I have no objection whatever to your plan of Police, and I shall hope to see it established during this season.

The attempt to get the Cavalry from the Deccan has wholly failed; hardly a man would go. Accordingly I am thrown back upon our own Bengal Cavalry which are all very distant—and it will thus be a much longer business. This irregular Cavalry, however, will be military. It will not do to dot it in threes and fours in the district, like Police Sowars in the old Provinces. The press here, echoing what sounds proceed from Pegu, is beginning since the last arrivals to change its tone. There is now hope among them that the army in Pegu may survive Christmas. They are a miserable lot.

The report of the Committee about the Cantonment has come. It must go to the C. in C. I think the Tsatet Meen's (or some such name) site 5 miles below Meeaday is the best,² unless it be an objection that it is on the right bank of the river.

I have sent you down a thundering order about the Pagodas, on which you wrote.³ The last mail brings worse news than ever about Russia and I am in great perplexity. I wish very much to fulfil the intention which has been so long, but unavoidably delayed of coming down to Pegu, and yet I don't know whether I ought not to stay here. I shall be able to speak more decidedly before the mail goes to you.

You will all, I am sure, be shocked to hear of the death of poor General Godwin.⁴ Escaped from battle and disease in Pegu, he went strong and gay to the European climate of Simla—and was dead in a week. It is very sad. Colvin has gone off—

very happy. He received a public dinner here, strong evidence in this lazy land of the public estimation in which he is held.

Yours very truly,
DALHOUSIE.

¹ In his minute of 29 October 1853 confirming Phayre's refusal to allow royal gifts to be made to the pagodas Dalhousie wrote: 'It now appears that it was to be composed of Ministers of the King, who, dressed in their robes of state, and carried in a royal Golden boat, were to parade through the whole length of the province of Pegu. It will be observed too, that the letter declares it to be the custom of the King to send gifts annually 'to all the many Pagodas erected and worshipped within the Royal Kingdom containing the relics of Guadama [*sic*], thus laying the foundation for future request to be admitted in like state to every quarter of the Province.

'Such a mission would in the eyes of the people of Pegu be nothing less than a triumphal procession symbolizing the future restoration of the King's supremacy, while it would afford authorized facilities for numberless ramifications of intrigue.' (*I.S.P.*, Cons. 25 Nov. 1853, No. 9.)

² Now known as Allanmyo after Major Grant Allan, who marked out the frontier.

³ When Father Abbona brought to Phayre the King's letter asking for permission to make gifts to the pagodas, he informed the Commissioner that Mindon was intensely angry at having heard that the Shwe Dagon Pagoda at Rangoon, having been defaced by British soldiers, was 'all broken down'. Phayre immediately made an inquiry into the matter, and it turned out that a gallery, which had been driven into the pagoda during the First Burmese War, had been opened by Major Fraser, the Commanding Engineer, in order to ascertain whether it could be used as a powder magazine. No damage had actually been done to the pagoda. But attention was drawn to the wholesale desecration of pagodas in the province by soldiers searching for booty. Phayre, who had previously addressed both General Godwin and Commodore Lambert on the subject, and had received assurances from them that they 'invariably endeavoured to prevent such unseemly acts', decided to bring the matter officially to the notice of the Governor-General. He did so, he said in his report, 'from a thorough conviction of the danger which may arise from a people being roused to indignation in consequence of the utter disregard, which has in time past been shown to their religious feelings'.

Lord Dalhousie was scandalized at the news. He deeply regretted, he wrote officially to Phayre on 4 November, the proceedings at the Shwe Dagon Pagoda. 'The act was not a wanton desecration, nor was it wholly without warrant, for the Bad shahi Musjid in the Citadel at Lahore was for many years used for a precisely similar purpose. But

the Shoe degon Pagoda is of great note and of peculiar sanctity among the Buddhists; and I again regret the error of judgment that led to the breaking into the Pagoda, which was not the less a painful desecration in the eyes of the people that it had been committed on a former occasion.'

With regard to the general desecration of pagodas the Governor-General issued the following notification, which, he directed, was to be translated into Burmese so that the people of the country might know of the Government's desire to protect their places of worship:

'The Most Noble the Governor General in Council has learnt with regret and dissatisfaction the continued destruction and injury of Pagodas and places of worship throughout the Province of Pegu.

'Such acts of violence in a time of open war cannot be wholly prevented, but His Lordship in Council feels strongly the scandal, which their continuance now is calculated to bring upon our national character, and the exasperation, which an open and almost universal desecration of their sacred places may produce in the minds of the people of Pegu.

'His Lordship in Council therefore desires to notify to all who are in the service or under the authority of the Government, that whoever shall be proved to offend in this particular, hereafter shall be punished with prompt severity.

'The Governor General in Council expects that all officers within the Province, whether Civil or Military, will give special attention to the execution of the orders, that are notified hereby.' (*I.S.P.*, Cons 25 Nov. 1853, Nos. 11-15.)

⁴ Godwin had left Burma on board the *Zenobia* on 3 August after a farewell party given to him by nearly 80 officers. 'I am glad we have done him due honour', wrote Phayre in his private journal.

68

Rangoon, Oct. 28th, 1853.

My Lord,

I received your Lordship's letter of the 16th by *Zenobia*. I had already replied to the letter of the *Woongyee*, because it was required to make the Pilgrimage during the present month, which is the time of the year when offerings are generally made. My reply was, as your Lordship will have seen, not a peremptory refusal; and though my answer, if I had to give it now, would properly be in terms they could not misunderstand, still I trust your Lordship will not blame me for not having been so peremptory as I am now authorized to be. It might possibly have been your Lordship's wish to allow the Pilgrims to come

under certain restrictions, and my letter left it open for that course to be adopted. Now, should they come down with the unfortunate man they have in their power, I shall know how to act. I have told Father Abbona that the Pilgrims cannot be allowed to come, but I have not thought it necessary to write another letter, unless they make a further move. Regarding Father A's remark about the King making war, I regarded it as a speech intended to impress me with the great responsibility I should incur, if I refused the request: a cunning manoeuvre to *force* me into compliance with the application. I did not even think it necessary to mention it in my public dispatches. I feel assured from my various conversations with Father A., that the King is really anxious for a treaty, but wishes to have it without the surrender. Indeed he may feel that if he were to sign away the territory, his throne would not be safe. I enclose a copy of a letter received from Mr. Jacobs,¹ an Armenian, whom I directed Mr. Edwards² to call down from Ava. I propose then making a regular correspondent of him. I have sent up a Burman also, who will be quite independent of, and unknown to, Mr. Jacob. I desired Mr. J. to come down, in order that I might arrange personally with him as to how the correspondence is to be carried on. The copy of the letter is sent verbatim.

I do hope my plan for Police establishments will be favourably received. I feel assured it is the one most suited to the country.³ But the Irregular Cavalry forms an essential portion of the scheme. The gun boats, we already have, will in all probability be sufficient. I am not, My Lord, a particularly sanguine person, but I feel assured that this Province can during the coming dry season be thoroughly set in order. The only portion of my plan, which I already feel your Lordship will not approve of, is that which gives Military detachments here and there. Yet I do not see how this is to be avoided. However, I look forward to the ground being traversed and the plans personally arranged by your Lordship. I trust that by the time this reaches Calcutta, the news both from Europe and the North West will be favourable. I was exceedingly gratified to hear of the appointment of Mr. Colvin. A better successor to Mr. Thomason could not have been found.

Two houses are ready here, and I hope to have the pleasure of welcoming your Lordship in Rangoon by the 10th or 12th of November. I am, My Lord,

with much respect your obedient servant,

A. P. PHAYRE.

¹ *Infra*, no. 69.

² *Supra*, no. 25, note 1.

Memo. of Conversation with the Revd. Father
Abbona on 27th Oct. 1853.

The Revd. Father said, if we objected to a treaty which did not include a formal surrender of Pegu, why could we not form a truce for five years? The object of this, he said, was to give the Burmese an opportunity of sending a deputation to England to gain more favourable terms.

I replied, no truce or agreement could possibly be come to, which was not based on the formal transfer of the country now held by the British.

He again stated as to war (but in a different manner to that assumed on a former occasion) that he feared it might result, if we gave the Burmese no hope of a reconciliation, or of some settlement being come to. He again alluded to the policy of giving them an interest in Bassein. Now they are like people without hope, and might become desperate. I replied that if they showed themselves true friends to the British, and concluded the treaty offered, then the Ports of Pegu would be practically as much at the disposal of their merchants as of our merchants.

He referred again to a truce for five years, and said if that was only made, matters would settle down, and by that time a treaty would be easily arranged.

He again mentioned that the King would be willing to agree to pay a large sum of money (which he could not possibly pay), and in default to forfeit the territory we hold. I said I could make no serious reply to such a proposition.

He then said the King had also spoken of another plan—but the Priest said he feared I would only laugh. I asked what is it? He replied: 'The King said, let us have hostilities nominally for two or three months and each retain what we hold at the

end of that time.' On my asking what could possibly be the meaning of such a curious proposition, the Priest said, the King thereby saw a mode of saving his honor, and justifying himself to his own people for resigning the country to us. Inasmuch as his strong point now was that he had not fought against us, and therefore was unjustly made answerable for the deeds of his Predecessor. I did not think it worth while inquiring further on this point.

Note.

I am, however, convinced that the King is really anxious to come to some settlement with us. He probably feels that this would strengthen him. An outbreak of a Shan tribe, mentioned by Mr. Jacob, shows that all about him is anything but secure.

Father A. was particular in informing me that a very powerful Shân Chief had sent in his adherence, and that all were firm in their allegiance. I think it very doubtful.

A. P. PHAYRE.

69

Amrapoorah, 11th Octr. 1853.

R. S. Edwards Esq:¹ Rangoon.

My dear Sir,

I have received your kind chit dated 22d August on the 30th September inclosed in our mutual Friend G. Manooks letter and after witch I received yours of the 16th August vice Proom by a Arracan man naimed Shake Munnoo on the 9th Ultimo I was well acquainted with your old friendship towards me but in reading your kind letter it gave me grate hopes not only gave me hopes but it made me shure of my propertys and I am quite nurished in my health I will never forget the favor you don to me. The Birmease Tawck great deal fighting the English but the Present King has no intention of Fighting it is his Brother the Prince Angshamain [i.e. the Ein she min] that thinks very great of himself, People comeing from your quarters they bring Parcel of false news saying that the English has drawn back their troops from Proom there is only four or five hundred men, when they hear such news they intend fighting but I think they will suddenly attack you when they get an opportunity they are exercizeing *Canon* and *guns*. There is a French Officer arrived

at Shobow [Shwebo] he has made some gun powder as muster and a patern of a gunpowder Pounding Engine, the King made a present of 250 Ticcals a ruby ring and seven silk Putshows after receiving the present the poor officer was so unlucky that the robbers got in to his hut and stole all his close, the silver, ruby ring and his officers apalet [i.e. epaulette] coat the theaves were caught some part of his things was recovered but not his coat. The Birmease Coart do not trust him they have a suspection on him thinking him to be a British spy.

A yong man naimed Mr. W. Savage from Basin like a fool, according to his saying he holded a situation of seventy rupees at Basin, his Uncle is also in the British Governments service, he spoke wanders before Angshamain, my lord says he dont take me to be a small man, You will find the Black seed [အဇေဝု ၂] * in all meadisins if your lordship will send me down as an ambassadour. I will be able to settle all the affairs with the English after all his boasting he only received thirty Ticcals he stands as an Interpreter here after he will be starving then he will repent, I dont now what brought that young man here. I am very sorry for him. The news arrived the other day that the Pagan† Kings governors are all executed, I am not shure but I think it must be true these are the Officers viz Bowmoo Mainthaw Mawn myah boo-Autwo Woon Mawnbwah; Lubanago Autwo woon and his son Seen Autwowoon Mawn Powtshy and a few others. Yesterday the Town was alarmed it seems that 21 miles from Amarapoorah a village called Gawndmaw there comes two or three thousand Sheeams [Shans] called (hohawn) came and distroyed and robbed the village and hoisted their white flags the gates of the Fort is shut and troops sending out against the enemy as fast as possible Upwards of three thousand men are all ready gon we dont now what will become hereafter. We just now got news that the enemy are all runaway not to be found or seen. There is still troops going out. I am to go to Shobow to get a Pass out for myself. The Padry Don Abono is 18 days that he is gon from this Place by the King's order in a war boat he is to come back in forty days; They have prepared the town, repaired the Palace, and news is that the Angshamain is to come in on the tudincuit lawbeego 5th‡ and the King tusawnmow Lawzan

5th,² I cannot say after this disturbance wheather the King will come or not he is also weighting untill the arrival of the *Padry*, The King has great trust in the *Padry* but not the Mynisters.

Your old friend Miahwady Woongy woo tsha dyed the other day he often asked for you.

The head queen Sarawady's daughter is in family way.³ The old King's daughter Soo Phœaw she is the third Queen. She is been acquireing [i.e. inquiring] after you I have nothing else to say,

I remain My dear Sir yours sincerely

J. G. JACOB.

* This alludes to the seed in question being a favourable medium for administering medicine. A. P. P.

† Pagahm Mew of the map.

‡ Nov. 5th, 1853.

¹ *Vide ante*, Letter No. 25, note 1.

² tudincuit lawbeego 5th=the 5th day of the waning of the month Thadingyut (seventh month of Burmese year).

tusawnmow Lawgan 5th=the 5th day of the waxing of the month Tazaungmon (eighth month of Burmese year).

The Burmese month, a lunar one, is divided into two halves corresponding to the waxing and waning of the moon, and days are numbered accordingly.

³ According to Burmese custom Mindon Min upon his accession married Tharawaddy Min's eldest daughter. She became his 'head queen', as Jacob expresses it.

70

Private. Government House. November 4th, 1853.

My dear Phayre,

I received your letter by Zenobia, and am glad to receive continued good accounts. Even the press here is obliged to cease croaking. They are clearing their throats, and I should not be surprised to hear before long a revival of the 'Song of Triumph' among them.

I am sorry to say the news from Europe are worse than ever by this mail. Still I will not give up hopes; for I am really anxious to come down, believing that I can do good.

If Padre Abbone makes any more proposals such as you

describe, laugh in his face. He is either a fool or thinks us so. If he talks of war, tell him to let the King make it, *if he dare*.

I will write shortly, and I hope more positively, by Berenice in a few days. We are all quiet in the North West.

Yours very truly,
DALHOUSIE.

71

Private. Government House. November 5th, 1853.

My dear Phayre,

In reply to your letter of 28th ultimo I wish to assure you that I make no objection to the terms of your reply about the mission. As long as it was a negative, I did not much care for the grounds on which it was put. You have now full authority; and the negative, if application is renewed, should be as peremptory as is consistent with courtesy. All these foolish hopes with which they are, or affect to be, buoying themselves up, should be exploded; and the conviction should be brought home to them that Pegu is British as long as India may be so. This is one of my reasons for wishing to proceed myself to the frontier. They will probably perceive that if the G.G. comes to Meeaday, to fix cantonments, etc., they have played their best card except war; and if they play out that, I am quite prepared to trump it. I have no doubt you correctly interpreted Padre Abbone's hint as to war. There can be, and shall be, no Treaty which does not bear Cession on its front.

I have read Mr. Jacob's letter. I hope his intelligence is more correct than his spelling, or we shall not have a good bargain. I will see Mr. Spears again.

I have already assured you that your Police scheme will be at once assented to. Irregular Cavalry too, I hope, you will have this season; and detachments you shall have. But I hope you don't mean to make Police Sowars of them; for that, I think, would not work.

In your expressions of confidence as to the future I fully concur; and I wish to assure you that while I have been deeply and justly displeased with much pusillanimity and agitation (to call it by no worse name), which have come under my notice during the last six months, I have regarded with much satis-

faction your calm and steady reliance on your real power, and on the certainty of its ultimate establishment.

In my last letter it was mentioned that the news from Europe were worse than ever. In spite of this, however, I still hope to be down at Rangoon about this day month. A Councillor is coming in and another going out on 1st, which are impediments to my getting away on the 16th, as I wished. By the *Berenice* I send some servants. I hope you will make them behave themselves. My wish would be to go up to the frontier as soon as I can, and leave Rangoon work till I return. Will you have an eye to this, that I may not be delayed for want of a boat.

We shall not be many;

2 Secretaries,

2 A.D.C.

a doctor,

will be all—and we are none of us fine gentlemen, and can bear being knocked about, if necessary.

Believe me to be, Yours very truly,

DALHOUSIE.

72

Private. Government House. November 8th, 1853.

My dear Phayre,

Major Ramsay¹ and Dr. Grant,² who are both ailing, go down to Rangoon in the *Bernice* tomorrow. They will not, however, be able to give you any information, beyond what I have already said, as to the probability of my coming. My wish is to leave this on 2nd or 3rd December, and in the hope of being able to do so, I shall send some servants now.

My plan is to remain but a very short time at Rangoon, and to proceed at once to the frontier. I will trust the arrangement to you. On my return to Rangoon I will remain as long as may be necessary, and visit Bassein on my way back. My visit on this, as on all other occasions to other places, must necessarily be short; but a great deal is to be done in little time.

My main objects are:

1. The boundary.
2. Frontier Cantonments.
3. Barracks.

4. Road to Tounghoo from Meeaday.
5. Road over Tounghoop Pass.
6. Road from Prome to Rangoon.
7. Road from Rangoon to Pegu, etc.
8. Communications by water with Sitang and Tounghoo from Rangoon.
9. Post Office.
10. Police.
11. Pagoda etc. at Rangoon.

For No. 9 I have sent down Mr. Bennet. For No. 8 I want the man who navigated the creek during the monsoon.

The rest must be talked of, and, I hope, well started.

Believe me, Yours very truly,

DALHOUSIE.

¹ Colonel James Ramsay, Military Secretary to Lord Dalhousie. In December 1851 the famous Koh-i-Noor diamond had been entrusted to him and Colonel Mackeson jointly for conveyance to England as a present to Queen Victoria from the Court of Directors. He was a kinsman and personal friend of Dalhousie. Some months after the Rangoon visit it fell to his lot to break to the Governor-General the tragic news of Lady Dalhousie's death while on her way home to England in June 1854.

² Dr. Grant was official physician to the Governor-General. He is not to be confused with J. P. Grant, the Governor-General's Foreign Secretary, who also accompanied Lord Dalhousie on this visit to Burma.

73

Private. Government House. November 19th, 1853.

My dear Phayre,

The English Mail, delayed till yesterday, has brought us bad news at last. This Turkish question has moved a step onwards from bad towards worse. Still nothing overt has occurred; and as it must be long before any of the consequences of war with Russia can actively affect us in India, and as we are all quiet on the Western frontier and elsewhere in India, I shall still feel myself at liberty to come down to Rangoon in the first week of December, after the next mail shall have arrived.

I have every reason to hope that an Irregular Cavalry regiment will be on its way down here directly. At Head Quarters they

anticipate no difficulty; but they have not yet reported positively. The mail brings no intelligence of honours or promotions for the war. All the ministers and the Queen have been out of town, which has caused unavoidable delay. I have no hint even of what is intended.

Major Du Vernet of the Trigonometrical Survey leaves that department (for which he is now not capable, and in which he quarrels with his Chief), and he wants employment for the present in some cognate department. Would he be useful to superintend a survey in Pegu?

The 29th *are* to go to Moulmein; so that you will have five European corps in Pegu for this year as before.

Yours very truly,
DALHOUSIE.

74

Rangoon, Novr. 21st.

My Lord

I have received your Lordship's letters of the 2d, the 4th, the 5th and the 8th. I will be ready with full information on every point required, and hope to see your Lordship here, by the 6th or 7th prox°. Everything is very quiet up above, but of late there have been floating rumours of conspiracies, and they have ripened at last into positive intelligence of a plot, which is on foot in Rangoon, having in view no less an object than taking possession of the Pagoda by a sudden coup de main.¹ It is almost incredible, and *this* part of the plot may be exaggerated; but that some rising is intended I have no doubt. Men are now down here from above, who are organizing it. I have deemed it best to let it go on, with the view of crushing it the more effectually. In the mean time due precautions have been taken in concert with the Brigadier Comg. Only a very few Europeans know of the affair, as secrecy is of course essential to the success of the 'counter plot'. You may depend on my vigilance and prudence, My Lord, in this affair. I really rejoice it has come to this, as there have every now and then been dark rumours, and I have not felt so happy for a long time. That such an attempt should be spoken of, or intended, in our stronghold Rangoon, shows what a barbarous ignorance of our power exists

among these people. This matter has prevented my replying to one or two references—the Custom House Draft act, and the petition of the Chamber of Commerce among others.

I was much shocked and grieved to hear of General Godwin's death. He left this in high health and spirits.

I will make all the arrangements for your Lordship's journey up the river. I am glad to say Major Ramsay approves of the house which has been prepared.

I have returns of the Exports from Meeaday during October. A great deal of salt and Ngapee went up, and the collections were Rs.2,200. Riee of course cannot yet be expected to be exported. I will at once establish the Custom House at Toun-goo. It will be very serviceable. I am only fearful of multiplying establishments, or should have recommended it before, and I kept the matter until your Lordship should arrive. Cutting a canal from Pegu City to the Sitang is another plan I shall hope to bring before your Lordship.

I have no further intelligence from correspondents at Ava, but I hear the King has not yet returned to Amarapoora. I have news that two golden boats had arrived at Meeaday with a letter for me from the Woongyee; but they refused to deliver it unless allowed to come on. They were the boats with the offerings. What connection these said offerings had with the plot, I may be able to inform your Lordship hereafter.

22d, 8 a.m.

I have kept this letter open until now, but have nothing of consequence further to communicate. 250 men of the 80th Regt. go up, and we have received about 90 men of the Madras Fusiliers from Bassein, so that it was not worth while altering the previous arrangement. It is also desirable that there should appear no preparation on our part in order that the plotting gentlemen may be allowed fully to commit themselves.

I believe no one, who goes up in the Berenice, knows anything of the affair.

I am, My Lord,
with much respect your obedient servant,

A. P. PHAYRE.

¹ *Vide* Letter No. 76, note 1.

75

Government House. December 5th, 1853.

My dear Phayre,

I hope to leave Calcutta on Thursday the 8th, and, going round by Akyab, to be at Rangoon on Tuesday. The 8th Cavalry are on their way down. It is a long march, however. We are to meet so soon, that I need say no more.

Yours very truly,

DALHOUSIE.

76

Rangoon, Decr. 3d, 1853.

My Lord,

By the present mail I transmit a despatch containing the account of the conspiracy to take the Pagoda.¹ The seizure of the suspected men has completely quieted the minds of the people. From Ava as your Lordship will see the accounts are good. The King has come to Amarapoora, which is undoubtedly a sign of peaceful intentions. I am now making, or rather have made arrangements here to drive out the man Nga Pyo, who last year troubled the Martaban Province, and latterly has been hiding in the Junguls west of the Salween. A force will move against him about the 20th inst. from Shwé gyeen, and also from Pegu.

My accounts from up the river are satisfactory. The man who has so long been troubling Tharawaddee is prepared to run, and I much fear we may not be able to catch him. With the village Police your Lordship has approved we shall be able to prevent such gentlemen from raising their heads in future. I have not sent up a despatch regarding the Police, because I am in hope of your Lordship being here in three days more. The matter of a canal from Pegu to the Sitang river has long attracted my attention, but I have hitherto kept it back on the same account.

A steamer arrived from Prome yesterday, and I regret to say brings accounts that Sir John Cheape had met with an accident by falling from a Phoongyee house, breaking his collar bone.

I believe Father Abbona is rather afraid he is losing influ-

ence at Court. On the strength of some conversation with Sir J. Cheape and Captain Latter on his way down here in October it seems he wrote up to Ava to say the deputation of Pilgrims would be allowed to come. They then came as far as Meeaday, and were somewhat disappointed at having to return. Expecting and hoping to see your Lordship so soon, I do not write regarding Mr. Spears, who has gone up to the Capital, and who, I think, would be very useful as a correspondent there. I am, My Lord,

with much respect, your obedient servant,

A. P. PHAYRE.

¹ In the dispatch referred to here Phayre reported that the object of the plot was to capture the Shwe Dagon Pagoda, set fire to the Commissariat Buildings and Custom House, plunder the Civil Treasury, and murder all Europeans in Rangoon. 23 November was the date fixed for the outbreak, as this was a Buddhist worship day, when large numbers of people would come in from the countryside to visit the pagoda and would thus screen the movements of the conspirators. No action was taken by Government until the night of the 22nd, when Brigadier-General H. Elliot, the officer commanding the Rangoon garrison, placed protective troops at every threatened point. Evidently these preparations showed the conspirators that their plot had leaked out, for they made no move whatever. On information lodged by a number of Burmans, notably Maung O, son of a former Sitke of Rangoon, certain suspects were arrested. At the same time Captain Nuthall and a party of the Pegu Light Infantry were sent out to deal with some dangerous bands of dacoits, whose movements were noticed in the vicinity of Rangoon at the same time as information came in about the plot. These were dispersed and a number captured, and this first exploit of the P.L.I. won the official congratulations of the Government of India. In a minute dated 19 Dec. 1853 Dalhousie warmly applauded the prudence and prompt action of Phayre and his subordinates. He did not doubt the reality of the plot, he said, and he was disposed to think that the King's mission to the Shwe Dagon Pagoda was intended to arrive at the time of the outbreak, and was part of the scheme, although there was no evidence of this. He was of opinion that while Mindon Min and Father Abbona were probably ignorant of the plot, the Heir Apparent was behind it. (*I.S.P.*, Cons. 30 Dec. 1853, No. 5.)

A few weeks later further evidence accrued of the reality of the plot. In January 1854 Phayre transmitted to Calcutta a letter from a Burmese correspondent whom he had sent to Amarapoora three months earlier, and in whose integrity he possessed complete confidence. The writer stated that the headmen of the villages in Lower Burma were received

at Court and encouraged to create disturbances, royal orders to this effect being entrusted to them. The bearer of the letter, he said, could name three men who had been sent down to Rangoon, and who would be found to be in possession of royal orders authorizing the dacoit leader Gaung Gyi among others to co-operate with them. One of the men named by him to Phayre turned out to be a certain Maung Gyee, the chief man among the suspects already arrested on Maung O's information. No royal orders had been found in his possession; but damning evidence in the shape of the red velvet robe of a Wungyi had been discovered in his house. (*I.S.P.*, Cons. 24 Feb. 1854, Nos. 28, 29, 30.)

N.B. For the explanation of the gap in the correspondence at this point see Appendix II, p. 417.

77

Rangoon, Jany. 20th, 1854.

My Lord,

After your Lordship's departure from the Bassein river we examined the ground in the vicinity of Negrais island, and I beg to forward a report of our Proceedings.¹

I have received a letter from the Burmese correspondent at Amarapoora whom I mentioned to your Lordship.² The man writes sensibly. The last paragraph is the most important, as containing intelligence which corroborates the information we had, relative to the conspiracy to take possession of the Pagoda. That is, it shows that men were sent down to create disturbances, and one of those men was, by independent testimony, previously denounced in Rangoon and apprehended as a conspirator.

The Land sales in Rangoon are going on remarkably well. Nearly all the lots in Square F. (that reserved for pukka buildings only) have been sold, and have realized so far nearly two lacs of rupees.

Your Lordship may remember the case of the Pilot who grounded the Tenasserim. After hearing the explanation regarding the ship touching on the Hastings, which is, that at the request of the Commander he was hastening up to town on account of the machinery requiring repair, I have considered that restricting him to vessels of only twelve feet of water for three months will be sufficient punishment. The man bears a general good character.

There has been no arrival from up country since your Lordship left this. I am anxious for news from Tharawaddee, and

should have been glad to be able to send your Lordship further accounts. The Indus was expected to-day, but has not appeared.

Lieutenant Ward I.N. left this yesterday for Pegu by boat to go to the Sitang.

I leave this for Prome on the 23d inst., and immediately commence work in the interior. I am, My Lord,

with much respect your obedient servant,

A. P. PHAYRE.

¹ Although the navigation of the Bassein river was good, Lord Dalhouse on his visit to the city of Bassein at this time thought that a better port could be established nearer the sea just behind Negrais Island. Phayre and Dr. Forsyth, superintending surgeon in Pegu, were accordingly directed to examine the site after the Governor-General's departure for India. They were unable to come to a decision in the matter, and asked for further enquiry to be made. The project ultimately resulted in the foundation of the port of Dalhousie, which signally failed to realize the high aspirations of its founders.

² *Vide* Letter No. 76, note 1.

78

Near Pantanau, Jany. 31st, 1854.

My Lord,

Hearing that the large village of Pantanau had been burnt by Dacoits, I went there yesterday afternoon. It was dark when we arrived, but I immediately received information that the inhabitants had been driven off in the usual style by Dacoits. Learning that they could not be above 6 or 7 miles off, I determined to follow them up. We left the steamer in two boats at 4 a.m. this morning and surprised the party just about day-break. The jungul was so close they escaped, but we took most of their arms. We then had the pleasure of releasing about 3000 souls, who had been driven off from Pantanau, and were destined to be taken to Kyunkayeen, the former stronghold of Myat T'hoon. Before we could get them all off a party of troops came in from Donebew. Captain Fytche is at Lemena and I have just passed a detachment of Nat. Infty. and Europeans in boats, whom I have sent to him, so that all will be well in a short time, I doubt not. The people say these ruffians professed to be acting under orders from Ava.

I am now on my return to Yandoon, where Sir J. Cheape has

remained in the Flat, and tomorrow morning I pursue my way to Prome, where I am very anxious to arrive. I am, My Lord,
with much respect your obedient servant,

A. P. PHAYRE.

79

Private. Government House. February 11th, 1854.

My dear Phayre,

Yesterday I received your letters of 20th and 31st January. The accounts from the Tharawaddy side appear to me to be as good as we could wish. From Mr. D'Oyly's letter it would seem that Captain Boyd was unduly precipitate in retiring from the jungle after the surprise of Moung Koung Gye was effected. However, a good deal was done in surprising him at all; and an officer may naturally feel anxious to get his men out of such a tangle as these jungles are.¹

Whatever you may think necessary about local roads, such as you mention, do at once, without waiting for authority. Time is everything just now; and you shall be borne out.

The outrage at Pantano is disappointing, because it gives a pretext for more exaggeration and misrepresentation. But your prompt attack upon them, and the simultaneous movement of so many detachments towards the disturbed point, will, I hope, put this down, and gradually cause similar outrages to cease. I am not so unreasonable as to expect that they should cease all at once. The Home authorities will not be so unreasonable either. And if the Home Press and Public are unreasonable, we can't help it. We will carry on steadily and trust to time.

The Rangoon papers are full of Captain D'Orgogny.² I forgot to mention him when we met. Tell me whether you think he has been doing mischief. At present I regard him as not capable of doing us any *real* mischief, but starving and ready to do anything for food and money. I have no news to give you. Matters in Europe look more warlike than ever—and the chance of a peaceful solution was less, when the mail came away, than it has ever yet been.

Yours sincerely,
DALHOUSIE.

¹ This was the culmination of Lieut. D'Oyly's operations against the

dacoit leader of Tharawaddy district. With small detachments of the Pegu Light Infantry and the Arakan Battalion, the Assistant-Commissioner of Prome was hunting Gaung Gyi from pillar to post during January 1854, and he was in full flight in the direction of the Pegu Yoma. Just after he struck camp on 9 January at Pyinmagon, one of these detachments under Captain Boyd surprised his party, killing one of his sons and capturing his senior wife, his gilt umbrella, gong and much else. Not until they had given up the chase on account of the lack of water was it discovered that they had almost captured the redoubtable Gaung Gyi himself.

² According to Phayre's Burmese correspondent at Amarapoora, D'Orgoni at this time was employed by the Burmese Government in manufacturing shells, but he was treated with great caution by Mindon Min and his brother, who suspected him of being a British spy. (*I.S.P.*, Cons. 24 Feb. 1854, No. 29.)

80

Prome, Feby. 8th, 1854.

My Lord,

Having understood that a mischievous report was taken down to Rangoon by the last steamer, to the effect that a Burmese force was marching towards our frontier, I hasten to despatch by express this letter to your Lordship, in the hope it may arrive in time for any steamer, which may be leaving before the regular one. The news of a force marching down against us appears quite unworthy of credit. It appears that there has been a movement of some men to Toungdweng, a place to the East of Patanago. This is probably meant as a frontier post and nothing more. I beg to enclose copy of a letter I received on my arrival here from Mr. Spears. Your Lordship will see that it is favourable. The price of rice at Amarapoora is just three times what it is here. Mr. Spears speaks of letters to me dated the 7th and 8th. I suppose those have gone on to Rangoon, as I have not received them.

The accounts from Tharawaddee altogether I consider satisfactory. Captain Smith seems to think the difficulties in his way greater than I do. We cannot expect matters to settle down all at once.

I am at once taking steps for forming a river police with the description of boats your Lordship saw at Yandoon.

During January there was a very large export of rice and paddy beyond Meeaday—namely

Rice	63,000 Baskets
Paddy	48,000 do.

The total amount of Custom duty in January amounted to Rs. 13,780! It is said the rice is principally purchased to store for the force the Burmese are stationing at Toungdweng. This may, or may not, be true. It is very clear, however, that even up to Amarapoora itself they will be very glad to take our rice, purchased at 1/3d [*sic*] the rate it is in their own city. I am writing to Mr. Spears on this subject now. I am, My Lord,

with much respect your obedient servant,

A. P. PHAYRE.

P.S. Major Fraser is here, and is taking measures regarding the ornamental building your Lordship spoke of. There will be no scarcity of timber for the public buildings.

A. P. P.

81

Padoung, Feb. 14th, 1854.

My Lord,

I left Prome this morning and came down here to commence my tour up to the frontier, inland. I beg to enclose to your Lordship two letters I have received from Mr. Spears. These went down to Rangoon and followed me up. I request your Lordship's attention to the subject of presents, which the King evidently wished to offer to your Lordship.

I think affairs go well in Tharawaddy; but Captain Smith writes me in a most dismal strain about the power of Moungh Khoung Gyee. I shall proceed there as soon as I return from my present work, and will not rest until I have put matters in a satisfactory train.

I came down the new road this morning to Padoung. It is well done, but the bridges appear slight. The Burmese praise it highly.

Not a word has been heard from Major Allan in his march to Toungoo for more than twenty days, but all is going on well, I doubt not.¹ I am, My Lord,

with much respect your obedient servant,

A. P. PHAYRE.

¹ Allan was engaged upon a survey of the country between Myede and Toungoo to see if the construction of a military road linking these places were possible.

82

Amerapoorra, 7th Jany. 1854.

Captain Phayre Commr. &c. &c., Pegu.

My dear Sir,

We arrived here on the 25th Decr. and I now embrace the earliest opportunity I have had of communicating with you. On the 26th his Majesty was pleased to send for Father Abbona and myself, favoring us with a private audience which extended over some hours, the only other persons present being A. J. Camaretta,¹ formerly a Collector of Customs Rangoon.

The King spoke to us about the Myan Oung Myaw thugee, Mong Poo,² and expressed his surprise that it should ever have been supposed that he had anything to do with his abduction. He assured us that MOUNG POO had never been brought into his country, and that if he has been murdered, it must have been by some one within the British territory, probably MOUNG GOUNG GEE of Tarawaddy.

His Majesty says he cannot consent to sign a treaty on the terms now offered by the British Government, as he considers those terms unjust, and if acceded to by him would reflect the greatest dishonor on his name. But at the same time, although not agreeing to the terms now proposed, his Majesty says he will do his best to promote a feeling of friendship between the two countries, and he trusts that you will not be backward in meeting his views on that head.

His Majesty declaims [*sic*] any connection with the bands of robbers now said to be infesting the country below Prome, and to show that he is sincere in this assertion, should any of these robbers take refuge in his territories after having committed depredations in the territories held by the British, he will, sufficient proof being given, see that they are punished in the severest manner; and as there should be reciprocity in all things, his Majesty hopes that you will do the same with all robbers and other bad characters, that may, after having committed depredations in his Kingdom, take refuge with you.

His Majesty also spoke about the boundary line, which he has heard it is your intention to draw 3 taings³ above Meeaday. This boundary the King says he cannot recognise, as in the first place

he has never been consulted in the matter at all, and again that it would include far more territory that was even asked for from him by the British, when the Woongyee was at Prome, in the beginning of last year. Altho' the King says he cannot recognise the boundary as at present proposed to be drawn by the English, he has sent no orders to his people down there to oppose them in any way, and he hopes that if any collision should take place out of that affair, the English will, without taking further steps of a hostile nature, refer the matter up to him, as he is anxious to continue on the most friendly terms with them.

His Majesty says that he has heard from various parties lately arrived from Rangoon, that a number of people had been circulating reports down there to the effect that the Burmese were actually prepared to march into the British territories with a large force. The King requests that you will take no notice of such foolish rumours, as if he should wish to go to war with the English, a thing he has never done yet, as you well know, he will send them notice in due form.

Trusting to have the honor of hearing from you soon, I remain,

Yours truly,

THOMAS SPEARS.

¹ Antonio Camaretta is described by Yule (*Misson to Ava*, p. 61) as 'a Goa Portuguese, who has long been a confidential servant of the Burmese Government, and now holds the offices of Collector of Customs at the capital, and of one of the assistant-treasurers to the King, in which capacity he has charge of the King's wardrobe, and is nearly all day at the palace'.

² The Myothugyi of Myanaung. This was the man referred to as 'Moung Pau Den' by Phayre in his letter of 7 October 1853 (No. 63).

³ The 'taing', the old Burmese measure of distance, was 7,000 'taungs' (or cubits) in length. The Burmese royal cubit was equal to 19.1 English inches. The 'taing' was therefore 2 miles, 193 yards, 2 feet, 8 inches long.

83

Amcerapoor, 8th Jany. 1854.

My dear Captain Phayre,

Yesterday at the request of the King I wrote you a letter, a translation of which I had to send to the palace for the King's approval. You will see by it that we arrived here on the 25th

Ultimo. We had a very pleasant passage up the river, and did not meet with a single robber either above or below Meadey. The Burmese have got their part of the country in very good order.

My letter of yesterday contains nearly all the King said. He received us in the most friendly manner, and I for one believe him to be quite sincere. The King I have only seen twice since my arrival here, and that always in private; he has given me full liberty to write anything I like, and to whom I like. The prince¹ I have seen frequently; in fact he can be seen at any time. His tone is much changed for the better since I left this in June last. You do not hear him talking now about going to war with the English, and so on in that style. It is quite a mistake, I think, to suppose that the prince will do anything contrary to the wish of the King. It is my opinion that they never conclude any business without first consulting together.

When at the Prince's the subject of poor Captain Latter's death was frequently mentioned, and from his manner at the time and the way he spoke of it, I feel quite certain that neither he nor any of his people had anything to do with it. The true author of that crime I trust you have found out before this.

The prince also spoke about Moungh Den, the Myan Oung Myau thuggee, and from what he said about that business, and all I have been able to hear regarding it since my arrival here, it is my opinion that he was never brought up to Ameerapoor. Moungh Goung Gee of Tarawaddy pointed out to me the man who did that deed.

The King is a little sore about your not taking the presents sent by Father Abonna, and says how can the English pretend to have a friendly feeling for me, when they refuse any small presents I send them. I told him it was not the custom of English officers to receive any presents without the consent of the Governor General, and even if they did receive them, they would be obliged to forward them on to Calcutta. The King then asked if the Governor General would receive any presents from him, if he were to send them. This I told him I did not know, but that if he liked, I would ask you. The Kyouk Myau [*sic*] woongee, the same that met you at Prome last year, is dangerously ill, and it is very doubtful whether he will recover

or not. When I saw him the other day, it was with the greatest difficulty he could speak a few words. He has got liver complaint. Savage, the young man you spoke to me about when in Rangoon, left this 10 days ago with a son of Mr. Calder's; so you will perhaps have seen him before this; he was not well received, and never saw the King. The prince gave him 30 ticals to keep him from starving, this was all he got up here.

Mr. Dorgony took leave of the King yesterday; he was received at the Nee lagan,² had a Birman title conferred [*sic*] on him, a ruby ring, and 1000 ticals silver to pay his expenses to France. This is all he has received at Ameerapoor, but when at Shoay Boo the King gave him two very valuable rings, a pony and some money. The rings he unfortunately lost when his house was robbed there.

D'Orgony does not appear to have ever advised the King to act offensively against the English, but merely as to the best way of opposing them, should they make a further advance. His plan is to destroy all the towns on the river side, take to the jungle and to protract the war in that way. Never to defend a stockade or to fortify any place and to avoid attacking any position of the English. D'Orgony thinks he has great influence with the people here, and intends, he says, to return after he has visited France.

Everything is as quiet as possible up here, without any appearance of change. This letter goes down in the same boat as D'Orgony, who starts early tomorrow morning, a native Christian having offered to take charge of it for me. Father Abbona received your note of the 7th Ult. yesterday. He desires to be remembered to you, but says that he has got nothing to write about at present. Trusting I may soon have the pleasure of hearing from you. I remain,

Yours truly,

THOMAS SPEARS.

¹ i.e. The Heir Apparent (Ein-she-min).

² The Nee lagan, i.e. the Nyilāgan in modern transliteration. I am indebted to the late Mr. Taw Sein Ko for this note. It was a 'meeting attended by officials in concert in order to receive instructions from the King'. It was held twice a day, from 7 a.m. to 9 a.m. and from 7 p.m. to 9 p.m., in the Nyi lā gan sanu.

84

Amerapoorra 15 January 1854.

My dear Capt. Phayre,

I wrote you on the 7th and 8th inst. and have little more to add at present.

The King and Prince I see every other day. When at the Prince's yesterday, I saw that famous man Mons. Myat Toon; he is a hanger on there, living on the Prince's bounty.

Mr. Fowl of Rangoon, some time before my arrival here, wrote M. D'Orgoni, to petition the King to allow him to come up here and pay his respects to the Golden foot. M. Dorgoni did so, and he now takes a message to Fowl granting him permission to come up when he likes. Fowl has also proposed to send or bring a steamer up here, and offers to sell the King one half, taking in payment any produce of the country the King may choose to give him, the other half to remain in the hands of the original owners. The steamer to run between this and Prome with passengers, goods &c. &c., the profit, if any, to be equally divided between the two parties.

Should Fowle [*sic*] be able to procure a steamer—a thing I doubt much in the present posture of affairs—the King will close with him at once, as he is very anxious to possess a vessel of that description.

The prince—by the boat I am now writing by—is sending a Burman boy about the age of sixteen to Calcutta to learn the English language; he takes money with him to pay his expenses for the first year. This looks well for the Prince. If he had any idea of breaking the peace, I hardly think he would trouble his head about sending people to Calcutta for their education.

Orders, I believe, have been sent down to the Myaet Tseen Woon, MOUNG IN, not to oppose you in drawing the boundary line, but at the same time to protest against it as being contrary to the wish of the King.

You will have plenty of wheat down this year; the new crop will not be less than 20,000 baskets. It will be ready for cutting in about a month hence. Grain is not so plentiful, but you will have a considerable quantity of it likewise.

Good rice is selling at 140 ticals ¹ per hundred baskets.

Everything is quiet here, and, as far as one can judge from appearances, likely to remain so.

Trusting to have the pleasure of hearing from you soon, I remain,

Yours sincerely,

THOMAS SPEARS.

¹ The Burmese 'Kyat' of silver, equal in weight to the Indian 'tical', passed as currency, its value being slightly above that of the Indian rupee at this period. For a full discussion of the Burmese monetary system the reader is referred to Sir Richard Carnac Temple's scholarly article 'Currency and Coinage among the Burmese' in the *Indian Antiquary*, 1897, pp. 197-204.

85

Private. Government House. March 7th, 1854.

My dear Phayre,

I have just received your letters of the 7th, 8th and 14th ultimo. The accounts they contain of the state of things at Ava, as shown by Mr. Spears' letters which I have thought it right to place on record,¹ are very satisfactory, in my opinion. Altho' I am sorry to find I have missed the mail for this letter, the official reply² will probably have said to you, as I now say, that I am very ready to meet every overture, which the King shews a disposition to make. If he wishes to send an envoy here with presents, he shall be received, if he is of respectable rank, with every respect and consideration; and presents shall be sent by an officer of rank in return. If he chooses to send only presents, they shall be received at Meeaday, and a return duly made.

The prospect is good also as to wheat and gram. It is comforting to me to see that you do not see before you such insuperable difficulties as Captain Joe Smith.³ I do not wish to put my faith in the predictions of our 'Mormon Prophet'. The intelligence of events that were passing in the Bassein region does not appear to have reached you,⁴ and you were ignorant of the attack made on Major Allan's party near Tounghoo.⁵ As yet we know little more than that these events have occurred and that they have been concluded. Of course the occurrence of them at all is to be regretted, because it gives occasion to those, who are so disposed, to raise a howl again. But there is no help for it.

The Irregular Cavalry have arrived, and will be despatched

as soon as possible. They will, however, be so late in arriving at Rangoon, that it will be hardly possible, or at least safe, to *march* them any distance at that season of the year.

Everything that comes from Europe carries a very warlike aspect at present. It is very provoking in every way.

The man, who is to be employed in laying out the gardens, has gone down to Rangoon. I hope he may be useful and successful.

The reply received from Ceylon shows clearly that there is no probability whatever of your getting Malays for the Pegu Corps either in that island or on the Peninsula. The regiment there is kept up only with the greatest difficulty. You must, therefore, depend wholly on your own province for recruits; and, if need be, raise your terms at once to ten rupees a month. Capt. Fytche, as I understood him, appeared to think that many men might be got to enlist on that side of the province. I hope that it may now be rapidly filled up.

Yours sincerely,
DALHOUSIE.

¹ Copies of these letters of Mr. Spears were circulated by Lord Dalhousie to the members of his council (*I.S.P.*, Cons. 31 Mar. 1854, No. 7, Enclosures B, C, D), noting: 'Mr. Spears gives genuine proof of his belief in the King's sincere desire for peace by returning to and remaining at Amarapoora, where if there were war he would be at the King's mercy.'

² *I.S.P.*, Cons. 31 Mar. 1854, No. 12, dated 3 March 1854. *Vide* Letter No. 161, note 2.

³ Deputy-Commissioner of Sarawah, who was engaged upon the ungrateful task of attempting to settle the lawless Tharawaddy district. Dalhousie playfully writes of him as 'our Mormon Prophet', a reference to his namesake, Joseph Smith, the founder of the famous sect who had been lynched at Nauvoo in 1844.

⁴ On 13 February Sparks, the Deputy-Commissioner in charge of Phayre's office at Rangoon during his tour of the land boundary, had forwarded to the Government of India a letter from Fytche announcing a formidable rebellion in the Bassein district, fomented by a man said to have come from Ava, who proclaimed that he had royal authority to drive out the British. It turned out to be a small affair which was broken up by two small detachments of troops without sustaining a single casualty. (*I.S.P.*, Cons. 31 Mar. 1854, Nos. 5-7.)

⁵ Major Allan had crossed from Prome to Toungoo through dense jungle in January. He had then set out for the boundary north of Toungoo. The Burmese headman of the district opposed his progress, and in a sharp encounter which took place Captain Geils and Lieutenant

Grant of the Madras Fusiliers were wounded and nine men killed. It was learned from prisoners that the opposition was unauthorized as the King had sent down orders that the British were not to be opposed even if they marched on Ava. (*I.S.P.*, Cons. 31 Mar. 1854, Nos. 7, 24, 31-36.)

86

Kanlay, near Mendoon Myo, March 5th, 1854.

My Lord,

I have marched up from Padoung to Mendoon, which latter place I reached on the 26th Ultó. Since then I have been engaged in settling the district, and appointing village officers. The people are everywhere delighted to see us. The Burmese maintained a Governor here until two days before we entered. He retired beyond the limit of the Meeaday pillars. To prevent the chance of his giving any trouble after my departure, I have left a detachment of Sepoys under an European Officer. They, however, will remain only for a month. After that I propose that a guard of 50 armed Burmese should be placed there during the next rains. Mendoon is about 40 miles due West of Thayet Myo—and 10 miles from the main range of the Arakan hills.—The country has been pretty well exhausted, but in a year or two will be a fertile district. I left Mendoon this morning, and am now marching to Thayet Myo. From thence I proceed to Tharawaddee, where Captain Smith appears to me to take somewhat gloomy views of affairs.¹ I have not had a line from Major Fytche since I passed up, so that I am unable to inform your Lordship how matters go in the Bassein district. Here I have had my tent thronged daily with crowds of people, who seem well pleased at the change of rulers.

I beg to enclose copies of two letters received from Mr. Spears.² I have written to Mr. S. to establish regular despatch boats. I trust your Lordship will approve of this. Mr. Spears mentions regarding some letter, said to have been received from Toungoo by the Burmese Officer on the frontier, which was very displeasing to the King. I have written to Mr. O'Riley³ to know what letter is referred to, as I have not before heard of it. I am,

with much respect your obedient servant,

A. P. PHAYRE.

¹ Lieut. D'Oyly's operations against Gaung Gyi had driven him

to take refuge in the hills. Here the unhealthiness of the locality led the British to withdraw their main troops under Major Cotton. The mistake was made of withdrawing them to Prome. Gaung Gyi re-emerged and had soon established a reign of terror in the northern part of Tharawaddy. The people lost confidence in the British forces. Smith went up to Calcutta on medical certificate, leaving his able assistant, Captain David Brown, to face the situation.

² Nos. 89 and 90, but the next batch of Spears' letters is printed here in the order in which they are to be found in the Dalhousie Collection, i.e. after Phayre's letter of 14 March (No. 88).

³ Assistant-Commissioner at Toungoo.

87

Mendat Myo, Two marches East of Mendoon Myo.

March 6th, 1854.

My Lord,

I have just received from Mr. Spears the letter, of which the enclosure is a copy. I have not yet received the letters he alludes to therein. I trust the contents will be considered satisfactory by your Lordship. Having addressed your Lordship yesterday, I have nothing to add at present. I am, My Lord,

with much respect your obedient servant,

A. P. PHAYRE.

I have just received a note from Mr. Moncrieff. The export of rice from Meeaday in February was 50,000 baskets or, say, 25,000 Mds. [Maunds]. Paddy 40,000 baskets. Duty collected 11,000 Rs. I have not forgotten your Lordship's injunctions as to making enquiry regarding the rice producing tracts up beyond Ava. A. P. P.

88

Prome, March 14th, 1854.

My Lord,

I returned here yesterday. I beg to transmit to your Lordship copies of several letters I have received from Mr. Spears.

Regarding the wheat and gram offered by the King for sale, the prices appear high; but I think it will be well to halve what is offered as an experiment, at the same time giving Mr. Spears to understand that the King himself being the seller is probably

the most uncertain means of supply, that could have been found.¹ I fear, however, that cannot be altered at present. Mr. Spears sends some information regarding the produce of rice in the upper country.

Your Lordship will observe what is said by Mr. Spears regarding the King's wish to retain Mendoon, and in the letter of the 7th March it is shown how strongly he feels on the subject. Should your Lordship consider it worth while to have a treaty, the Burmese giving up the rest of the territory and retaining Mendoon, (which is not a valuable district) the opportunity of doing so perhaps now occurs.

In Tharawaddee matters have not gone on satisfactorily. After Major Cotton's force² returned, there was a lull. Mounng Goung Gyee became again active, and the Officer in Command at Tappoon (Captain Raikes of the 67th Regt. B.N.I.), though he had 350 men in the place, allowed Goung Gyee to plunder and burn all the villages round the place. This has done much harm. Goung Gyee has gained what he wanted, a deal of grain and the people are more afraid of him than ever. I now proceed to Tappoon at once. Captain Smith has left Tharawaddee from sickness. Captain Brown of the 1st Madras Fusiliers has now Civil charge there, and is an excellent Officer. It will take some trouble to bring matters round again to what they were a month ago, but every exertion shall be made. I am, My Lord,

with much respect your obedient servant,

A. P. PHAYRE.

¹ *Vide* Introd., p. xlix.

² *Vide* Letter No. 86, note 1.

89

Ammapoora [*sic*], 3rd February, 1854.

To Captain Phayre, Commissioner, etc. Pegu.

Dear Sir,

When we were at the Palace yesterday, we were told by his Majesty the King, that he has received despatches from the General Commanding his forces at Toungoo, forwarding a letter, that had been received from the Officer in Command of the English forces in that quarter. This letter was in answer to

one from the Burman General, requesting that the English would put off a further advance, until the wish of his master the King should be known, and also requesting that fourteen days might be allowed them for the purpose.

Now what the King complains of at present is not that the English have advanced their boundary at Toungoo to the latitude of Meaday, but in the way that it has been done. He thinks that a little more civility might have been shown him, and that the threats, contained in the Toungoo letter, of a further advance in case of opposition being offered, were quite uncalled for, and do not, as far as he can see, tend in any way to the peaceful settlement of the two Countries.

The letter, that was received by the Burman Officer in Charge of the Country about Meeaday, informing him that the English would advance the boundary three tains¹ above that place, was written at least in civil terms, and gave no offence here.

As the King is sincerely desirous to remain at peace with the English, he hopes that you will not take the law entirely into your own hands, when any dispute may arise out of the boundary question, but that you will write to his ministers here, explaining the matter, and then, if they cannot give you redress, it will be time enough to use force.

All the Country up here is quiet and in good order. Rice and provisions of all kinds plentiful.

Trusting we may have the honor of hearing from you soon. We remain &c. &c.

P. ABBONA.

THOMAS SPEARS.

¹ *Vide* Letter No. 82, note 3.

90

Ammapoora, 4th February, 1854.

My dear Sir,

When at the Palace yesterday by the orders of the King, I wrote to you a letter¹ expressing his sentiments on the manner in which the boundary has been advanced at Toungoo. I could not well refuse to write this letter, and hope that you will not be offended at me for having done so. I have also to apologise [*sic*]

to you for having written another letter in something the same style on the 7th January.² It was sent by the same boat that took down M. D'Orgonie. One reason for my having complied with the wish of the King to write these letters was that they will put you in possession of what both the King and Prince think on the boundary question. I did my best to express myself exactly as they told me to write.

You will have no opposition in drawing the boundary line from this quarter, as I have been assured on good authority, that orders have been sent to all the King's people down there not to oppose you in any way.

Things up here are as quiet as they possibly can be, without the slightest appearance of any change. The Kyouk Maw Woongee is recovering slowly from his sickness, and will not be able to leave his house for some time yet; but he is now out of all danger.

I have only had one short line from Rangoon since I left, although plenty of merchants' boats have arrived from that quarter. Don Paulo³ and myself have been so much disgusted at this, that we are thinking of starting a small dawk boat of our own, so that we may be able to hear at least once a month from the land of civilization. The expense would not be great—thirty rupees would be sufficient for one boat. I may as well mention to you that if you should wish to hear regularly from this quarter, that [*sic*] there would be no difficulty in establishing dawk boats. The King, I am certain, would offer no opposition, and the expense for two good boats would not be more than seventy or eighty rupees a month. They might leave this for Prome on the 1st and 15th of the month, and could always be back in time to take their regular turn. Native Christians, trustworthy men, can always be had up here at any time to man them. We have heard of your having been on the frontier with the Governor General. I hope his Lordship was pleased with the Country. His arrival there was not reported up here until ten days after that event; the first person I heard it from was the Prince. Should this find you at Prome, the boat, by which it is sent, will return immediately; but should you be not there, it will follow you on to Rangoon, and bring back any letters you may think proper to send.

I am very anxious to hear from you, as I am not quite certain that you will be very well pleased with some of my letters.

Yours &c. &c.

THOMAS SPEARS.

¹ No. 89.

² No. 82.

³ Father Abbona.

91

Amorapoorra, 13th February, 1854.

My dear Captain Phayre,

Your esteemed favour of the 25th December only came to hand on the 8th of this month; the man you entrusted it to must have either spent a long time in the passage up or forgot to deliver it on his arrival here. I received it through the hands of the Kalawon.¹

What you say about remuneration is quite satisfactory and I shall be most happy to do the best I can on the proposed terms. I am only afraid that you will not always find my letters very interesting. But you must be aware that we have got very little of what is called news up here. Should you find anything in my letters, either in the manner or address, that may not please you, I beg that you will point it out to me at once.

Upon receipt of your letter I made enquiries about wheat and gram. The whole of the wheat is in the hands of the King, he having made advances to the cultivators of that article some months ago. The King I saw to-day, and would have seen him sooner, if it had not been that he was suffering from tootache [*sic*]. I told His Majesty that you had been writing me to make inquiries about wheat, and that if it could be procured at a moderate rate, you would take a large quantity for Commissariat purposes; but that you must first know the price. Upon which the King said, I will not fix any price, but you can write Captain Phayre and ask him what he will give me for new wheat per hundred baskets, to be delivered at Prome, the money to be paid to an Agent sent from here for the purpose of receiving it. There will be from 15000 to 20,000 baskets altogether, and if your offer is at all liberal, I have not the least doubt but that it will be all sent to you. When you write me,

kindly let me know the highest price you are willing to give, and the quantity that will be required. I say the highest price to prevent disappointment, but I will as a matter of course do my best to get it at a moderate rate. The new wheat will be ready for cutting in about a month hence.

The supply of gram will not be so plentiful as that of wheat, but I do not think there will be less than ten thousand baskets of it. As this will also be in the hands of the King, you can make an offer for it in the same way as you may do for the wheat.

I do not like the monopolising spirit that prevails here at present, and will always do everything I can to persuade the King against it. Rubies, Timber, Cutch, Hartal, Cotton and in fact every article of produce it is the King's intention to monopolise. He expects to make a profit sufficient out of these monopolies to pay all the expenses of his government—and he says that when he can do that, he will not levy any more taxes from his people. But as the King is a very intelligent man, I trust he will soon find out that monopolies in any shape are much more injurious to the Country than any other mode of taxation.

Things here are very much in the same state as when I wrote you last; neither the King or Prince have any wish to quarrel with our government at present. Of course you cannot expect them to love you very much, after having deprived them of about half their country; but you may be perfectly sure that they will do nothing openly against your Government. Should you be able to catch Mounng Goung Gee of Sarawaddy, or drive him out of the country, it would tend very much towards the settlement of matters here. Several petitions have been received from that worthy, but he has had no assistance from here either in men, arms, or money.

About a month ago a force of fifteen hundred men left this for Gemay (Chiengmai), to oppose an eruption of the Siamese [sic]. Those people have not yet returned, although it is reported that they have chased the enemy back again into their own country. The King says that this is the second time that the Seames have disturbed the border, since he has come into power; and if they do it again, he will certainly send a large army into their country in retaliation.

The King wants a steamer very much, and has asked me several times if I could not get one for him. Would our Government sell him one, if he was to pay the money down? say a vessel of some three or four hundred tons.

I wrote you last on the 4th instant apologising for having written you, by the orders of the King, two letters about the boundary question, the first on the 7th ultimo, and the last on the 3rd instant by a man of Father Abbona's.²

I shall have much pleasure in attending to your instructions about the model Pagoda; it will be finished and sent down as soon as possible.

Father Abbona desires to be remembered to you. He is trying to establish a school up here, and the Prince has promised to build him a school house; so all he wants now is funds to pay the school master.

I will do my best to follow out your instructions as to writing once a week or ten day[s]. We have not had a drop of rain since my arrival here until yesterday; and now it is coming down with a will.

I hope you will write me soon about the wheat and gram, and if it is not too much trouble, do it in duplicate, as the people who bring up letters are sometimes very careless about their delivery.

And I remain, &ca., &ca.,

THOMAS SPEARS.

¹ Kala (foreigner) wun (official), i.e. the Burmese official specially entrusted with the supervision of foreigners resident in, or visiting the capital. Transliterated 'colvoon' in Fleetwood's *Diary* (1696).

² i.e. conveyed to Phayre by a man of Father Abbona's.

Amerapoora, 18th February, 1854.

My dear Captain Phayre,

I was called by the King yesterday to have another talk about the wheat and gram. He has now thought it better to decide upon the price he will take for those articles. Wheat he will deliver to you at Promé for (250) Two hundred and fifty rupees per hundred baskets, and gram for (200) Two hundred.

Should you be willing to give those prices, you will require to write and tell me the quantity you require by the earliest opportunity. The purchase money to be paid, on delivery, to a person sent from here for the purpose of receiving it.

I wrote you a letter to go by a Mogul boat on the 13th inst; it was to have left the next day, but the owner not having finished his business here, it still retained [*sic*]*—*and so it is not certain when he may leave, and I do not know of any other boat going soon. I have thought it better to hire a small boat to send this letter by, than to keep it here for an indefinite time, more particularly as the wheat season will soon be coming on.

This boat will go as far as Prome, I have told the boatmen to deliver your letter to Lieut. Ardagh, and remain there until your answer arrives from Rangoon.

The King will look upon the above prices as binding, he says, on his part, and will send you down the gram, as soon as your answer arrives, agreeing to take it on the proposed terms.

The King also desired me to tell you that if there is anything else in his country, that you may wish to purchase, he will be most happy to let you have it. Do you want any good mast pieces? There are some beautiful timber here from 45 to 50 cubits in length.

Things remain here in the same state as before; Petitions are being received almost daily from the Officers in Command of the King's forces near Toungoo and other places on the border, requesting to be allowed to fight with the English.

But the King's invariable answer is, that so long as he is alive, he will not allow of any aggressive movements on his side of the border.

The price of the wheat may be a little high, but I trust you will be able to take it, as it would please the King very much.

And believe me &ca.,

THOMAS SPEARS.

P.S. This boat cost me thirty rupees, but I will not charge it to your account, unless you take the wheat or give me liberty to do so.

T. S.

93

Amurapoorra, 20th February, 1854.

My dear Captain Phayre,

Under cover to Lieutenant Ardagh, Deputy Commissioner Prome, I wrote you on the 13th and 18th instant answering your enquiries about wheat and gram. As these letters were sent down in a small boat for the purpose of despatch, I trust I may have answers to them in less than a month.

Yesterday Father Abbona and myself were again sent for by the King, and had a long talk with him in private. He asked us repeatedly if we were quite certain that the English would not seek a cause of quarrel with him, and if we were sure that they would not advance their border further to the northward. We both told his Majesty that he might keep himself quite easy on these points, as we had good reason to believe that the English would not without sufficient cause think of quarrelling with him, and that we were morally certain that they had not the slightest intention of encroaching further in his dominions.

I then reminded the King that I had told him the same thing on my arrival here two months ago—that is, that you would run the boundary line due East and West, six miles to the Northward of Meeaday, but would go no further. ‘Yes (the King said) but will you stand security that they will not suddenly advance upon me, if I withdraw all my forces from the border?’ I told him that I would do so. He then said: ‘I am happy to hear what you say, and in a course of a day or two will send orders to withdraw all my troops from Toungoo and other stations on the boundary, only keeping a few hundred men as a guard a little to the northward of Toungoo and Meeaday.’ I then asked his Majesty if he wished me to communicate this to you, and he said ‘Yes, certainly do so’. His Majesty also remarked ‘That when his troops are withdrawn, the English will not be so much troubled with robbers as they have been for some time past’.

It is not publicly known here that these troops are to be withdrawn, but I have not the least doubt myself of the King’s sincerity, and that in a course of a day or two orders will leave this commanding their return.

I got a pony from the King yesterday (a present). As it is

only a day or two since I last wrote you, I have got nothing further to communicate at present.

I hope you will find it convenient to take the wheat; you may depend upon the King sticking to his word. Father Abbona desires to be kindly remembered to you, and believe me, &ca., &ca.,

THOMAS SPEARS.

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Amrapoora, 28th February, 1854.

My dear Captain Phayre,

I had last the pleasure of writing [to] you on the 20th instant by a Mogul Trader under cover to R. F. Moncrieff, Collector of Customs, Meaday. As the boat left the next morning, I trust you have not been long in receiving that letter.

The day before yesterday about 1500 men of the Toungoo forces arrived here. Today they will receive presents from the King, and will then be dismissed to their respective villages. I have been assured by the King and Mr. Cameretta that orders have been sent from this recalling all the troops stationed on the frontier, with the exception of a few hundred men to act as a police, and keep the Country quiet.

Moung Bwa, the man who was Governor of Martaban at the commencement of the war, has been appointed Governor of Ya Mae then (Yamethin), a town situated, I believe, a considerable distance to the Northward of Toungoo. The burmens [*sic*] say about forty tains, but as I have no map of that part of the country, I cannot speak with certainty. Should you have a spare map of Burmah, I should feel much obliged by your letting me have it, as I would find it useful at times. Moung Bwa is still here, but will leave soon to take charge of that part of the frontier.

Mong Shoay Moung, formerly Governor of Kyangoin, has been appointed Governor of Tselane [Salin]. He will also leave this in a few days hence.

Three days ago a petition arrived from the Commander of the King's forces stationed to the Northward of Toungoo, stating that letters had been received from the Officers in Command of the English troops there demanding the delivery of certain Burman robbers, that had been captured by the Burmese

Authorities. The petition to the King stated that these men had been committing depredations on both the English and Burman side of the boundary, and that they, having heard of the whereabouts of these robbers, had sent a force against them, that several were killed in the fight and some others taken prisoners, that the prisoners after examination, having been found guilty, were put to death, &c. The King told me to tell you that it is impossible for him to say whether his people are right or wrong in this affair, 'and when you next write Captain Phayre, tell him from me that when there are any disputes on the border, I would feel pleased by his communicating with the Woongees at the Loot daw direct, giving the full particulars of the case, and to discourage, as much as you can, any correspondence between the English and Burman Officer on the border'.

The model Pagoda is now in hand, but it will take a longer time to finish it than I at first anticipated, I could not get any person to undertake to do it in less than three months. It is to be of one piece and finished in the best style, and will cost about 150 Rupees. The King somehow or other heard of my getting this Pagoda made and asked me who it was for; so I told him it was for you. He then said: 'I will make one for Captain Phayre too, and we will see whether yours or mine will be best.' The Kyouk mau Woongee is now nearly well, and will be able to attend the Loot daw in a few days.

Some three or four days ago a man of the Prince's by the name of Marker, an Armenian, arrived here. He has been relating some very wonderful stories about how matters are going on in the Northwest of India, telling the Prince as a matter of course, that the English are likely to get the worst of it there. However, I am happy to say that neither the King or Prince believes one half of what he says.

The Prince takes in, and pays for, the Calcutta and Rangoon Chronicle. He gets all those parts bearing on the present political state of Europe translated to him, and he is at present firmly impressed with the idea that there will be a general European War, which will extend to India. That France will not stick to England in assisting Turkey, but will go over to the Russian side as soon as the war is fairly commenced (this idea he has from Dorgonie), and then England will be obliged to give in.

Marker's boats have not yet arrived; he left them a long way down the river, and come [*sic*] up overland. He says that he has got letters for me, that will be delivered when his boats arrive.

Both the King and Prince are very kind to me; in fact, they rather pay me too much attention, the greater part of my time being taken up either at the Palace or the Prince's house.

Mr. Cammeretta desires to be respectfully remembered to you.

And believe me, &ca., &ca.,
THOMAS SPEARS.

P.S. The Burmese General in command of the King's forces to the Northward of Toungoo has been recalled, and is in disgrace. The King being a little afraid that his exploits there in the robber case may get him into trouble. He will very likely be put into confinement on arrival here.

T. S.

95

To Captain Phayre, Commissioner of Pegu, &ca.

Sir,

I have the honor to receive your communication of the 10th February on the 3rd instant, and now avail myself of the earliest opportunity of replying to it.

In answer to the first paragraph of that letter I beg leave to state that I am not at all certain whether I will be able to mak[e] arrangements, or not, for the delivery of wheat and gram in any quantity at Prome this year, none of these articles of produce being procurable in the bazar, the King having monopolized the whole. But I may as well state that nothing like two lacks of gram could under any circumstances be procured up here at present.

It is very possible that I may be able to make arrangements for the delivery of about 10,000 baskets of wheat and 10,000 baskets of gram, deliverable at the Prome Wharf, at the rate of 250 Rupies for Hundred baskets for wheat and two Hundred Rupees for Hundred baskets gram. Those being the prices at present asked by the King.

In reply to the 3rd paragraph of your letter I beg leave to

state, that I do not think that either wheat or gram could be delivered at Toungoo. But I will make further enquiries on this subject, and let you know in my next.

I have, &ca., &ca.,

THOMAS SPEARS.

Amrapoora, 7th March 1854.

96

Amrapoora, 7th March 1854.

My dear Captain Phayre,

I had the pleasure of receiving yours of the 12th February on the 3d Inst. with the various other enclosures. The boat that brought them up was rather a long time on the road. You may depend upon my doing the best I can to follow out your instructions.

When I next write, I think I will be able to give you a pretty accurate account of the quantity of rice grown up the Khueen Deen,¹ etc., etc. But you must be aware that to prosecute enquiries on subjects of that kind at present would only create suspicion, and do perhaps a great deal more harm than good. When you have got your boundary line fairly marked and settled, it would be a different thing.

The average price of rice here for the last five years in the months of June, July, August, and September was very nearly as follows:

	Ticals
1849. Amerapoora Bazar price, cleaned rice per 100 baskets	175
1850	190
1851	275
1852	250
1853	150

100 Ticals worth about 120 Rupees.

You may think that it looks a little inconsistent that the price of rice for 1852 and 1853—at the time when the supply of that article was cut off by the war—should be lower than the three previous years, when abundant supplies of that article was received from Pegu. But this can easily be accounted for. In the years '49, '50, and '51 we had very little rain up here, whereas in the years

'52 and '53 we had an abundance of rain, and consequently very fine crops all over the country. You may take it as a general rule, that when there is a deficiency of rain, the rice grown in Burmah proper—that is, all the Burman country above Prome—will not be sufficient to supply the inhabitants, and that they will always be obliged to purchase large quantities of Pegu rice to make up the deficiency.

The King and Prince are perfectly aware of this and have been exerting themselves, ever since they came into power, to make the country about Amerapoora, and particularly Shoay Bp Myow, as independent of our very fickle rainy season as they possibly can. A considerable quantity of the rice grown up here is irrigated from artificial lakes, and as the water that supplies these lakes is generally brought from the hills—where it rains regularly every year—or from running streams, they are, as far as this kind of cultivation goes, quite independent of the rains in the plains. Almost all those lakes are of very ancient state, but they have been suffered of late years to run much into decay, as I suppose it was found less expensive and troublesome to get their supplies from Pegu, than to put them into a state of repair. But now the case is altered; Pegu no longer belongs to the Burmans, and as they wish to render their country as independent as they possibly can of any extraneous aid, they have been exerting themselves, ever since the present King came into power, to put those ancient works into a state of repair. But as the quantity of rice grown in the way stated above is small, compared with that which is required for the consumption of the country, you may be perfectly sure that whenever we have a deficiency of rain here, the Burmese must purchase largely from Pegu—or starve.

The Burmans are a very curious set of people. When I came up here about two months ago, I made it a point to tell the King that, from what I had heard in Calcutta and Rangoon, the English Government would upon no account, I thought, modify the boundary question; but that they would draw the boundary line due East and West from a point marked three tains to the Northward of Meeaday. The King, of course, did not like this news much, but thought it better to let you have everything you[r] own way; and so directed me to write you the

letter of the 7th January (which you now acknowledge). I did so, and thought the matter was all settled. But yesterday the King called me again, and showed me a petition that had been received from his people at Meendoung Myow [Mindon Myo], stating that they had heard that the English intended to come up and occupy that part of the country, also requesting to know how they were to receive them, if they should come, etc., etc. I told the King that I had no doubt but that it was the boundary line that they were extending to the Arracan hills on the west side of the river, reminding him at the same time what I had told him on that subject long ago. His answer to me was very nearly as follows: 'I am not quite certain whether Meendoung Myow may or may not extend in some of its parts a little to the southward of the boundary line at present being laid down by the English. But it is a district of little value, and belonged personally to me when I was a Prince; so I trust the English will not let so small a thing as that come between us. When I was a Prince, and now when I am King, I have always been actuated by the most friendly spirit to the English, and it would be a poor return on their part, if they will not give up so small a thing as that to oblige me. All my subjects will look upon their taking that part of the country as a personal insult offered to myself. Tell Captain Phayre that I have acquiesced to [*sic*] their extending their boundary to the Northward of Toungoo and other parts without grumbling, and that I trust he will make the boundary line on the West side of the river take a small curve to the southward, if it should unfortunately happen that the Meendoung lands run to the Southward of the Boundary.'

My letters to you not yet acknowledged are:

Febry. 3rd and 4th. By a man of Father Abbona's.

„ 13th and 18th. By a small boat under cover to Lieut. Ardagh.

„ 20th. By a Mogul trader Aga Latch under cover to Mr. Moncrieff, Meeaday.

„ 28th. By a Mogul trader Aga Abdoolah—under cover to Mr. Moncrieff, Meeaday.

In my letter of the 13th February I have written you accepting of the terms offered by Government. My stay up here will extend at least to the end of the year, perhaps longer. The King

and Prince have both been informed about my understanding with you, and appear to like the arrangement; but I have not told any other person here except Camaretta and Father Abbona, leaving the King or Prince to do that, if they think proper. You need not be at all afraid that I will ever try to assume any political position here. But it has cost me some pains to explain to the King how I am situated.

His Majesty was rather surprised when he heard of the quantity of wheat and gram wanted for Commissariat purposes. It would be utterly impossible for Burmah to supply that quantity for some years to come. But as there is no want of land capable of growing those crops, in the course of a few years I have little doubt that the quantity required may be produced.

Wheat and gram will be rather deficient in quantity this year; of the former I do not think that you will get more than ten or twelve thousand baskets, and perhaps about the same quantity of the latter. I wrote you on the 18th Ult. giving you the prices the King would be willing to sell these articles at. He now says that he will not give you the wheat, unless you take the gram too, the wheat at 250 and the gram at 200.

Moung Bwa has not yet left for *Yae-mey-then* [Yamethin], but the twelfth of the moon four days hence is the day fixed on for his going. Mong Shoay Mong is to leave the day after. The troops on the frontier will not all be recalled, until those two men arrive there. I trust you will have no difficulty in drawing the boundary line on the west side of the river. If you cut off much of the Meendoung country, there is a chance of meeting with some resistance there; but the chance, I think, is very small.

M. D'Organie has written twice to the King since he left this: once from Prome, and again by the boat that took him down from this, when it returned from Rangoon. These letters contained absolutely nothing (Camaretta shewed them both to me), excepting a good deal of abuse heaped on the head of the Most Noble the Governor General for the policy pursued by him in Pegu.

The country up here is very quiet; you hardly ever hear of a robbery. By the by, the King has offered to pardon all robbers and other runaway people, if they only give themselves up. A

number have done this, and after having had their names taken down and received small presents, they have been dismissed with a warning that if they are ever caught at their former practises again, they will be sure to lose their heads.

We will have some merchant boats leaving this soon, when I will do myself the honor of writing you again.

And I remain, &ca.,

THOMAS SPEARS.

P.S. This afternoon I was again called by the King. He wanted to send me down on a mission to you to speak about the boundary line on the West side of the river. I had great difficulty in excusing myself, and only managed to do so by recommending Father Abbona or some others of his own subjects as much fitter for that than me. The King evidently does not at all fancy Meendoung Myow being intersected by your boundary line.

If you could possibly let him retain that part of the country (I believe only some two or three villages are to the southward of your line), it would have the best effect on him and all his people. Perhaps it might even induce him to sign a treaty—but I have no authority for stating this. However this may be, I should not at all be surprised if you have Father Abbona down at Prome in a few days to speak about Meendoung.

Father Abbona and myself have been called to meet at the Palace tomorrow, when this will be settled. The King himself said to me today: 'If the English do not disturb Meendoung Myow, everything else will be easily settled.'

T. S.

¹ The transliteration of Burmese names into English is still far from uniform. In the period of these letters every one seems to have had his own individual method. Here the river Chindwin is indicated.

97

Private. Government House. March 29th, 1854.

My dear Phayre,

I received by Sesostris your letters of 5th, 6th, and 14th inst. They were very welcome; for we had heard no tidings of your

party for some time, and I was glad of your being out of the jungle. The account you give of all the districts you have passed through is satisfactory. That of Tharawaddy is very different, and I lament to see that you think we have lost ground there of late. It is useless to discuss who is to blame, if anybody is. Two things are clear to me. The one is that the view expressed by Sir John Cheape and yourself is quite correct. The other is that the Mormon¹ is quite unfit for the management of such a district, and that he must be got out of it. There is fever enough in Pegu; but such a man is fit to fever a whole army.

Pray take steps for completing Nuthall's corps. I have already told you in a recent letter, that I have ascertained that Malays cannot be got. The Light Infantry then must be obtained at any pay; and if no pay will induce them to submit to the discipline, then we must take to well-armed and only half-disciplined Police levies, as Major Fytche has proposed. We are in possession of the official reports from that officer respecting the outbreaks in his district.² He has recorded some remarks, which, I think, were not justified;³ especially after my personal presence in his district and compliments on its tranquillity gave opportunity for any such observations, but elicited nothing in the least degree resembling them. However, I am resolved that there shall be no room left for any observations in a similar strain; and as you are aware that I altogether object to the numerous detachings of regular sepoys for which he applies, and as contrary to our former hope, a good deal of detaching will be unavoidably necessary in Tharawaddy, I have requested that the irregular levies may be raised and paid. I perceive that you do not admit the necessity. Still, I think that it should be done; and beg you will do it, and release the detachments.

The powers of sentencing and executing, for which you ask, have, of course, been given. You will perceive that the General thinks they may be given even to Deputy Commissioners, in the extreme case of persons openly in arms against the Government.

Major Allan's proceedings have been interesting.⁴ The attack on the party advancing to the frontier was of course to be regretted, on the score of good and gallant men hurt; but it was a local opposition—it was in reason to be expected—and the

press up here is beginning to make less handle of these affairs, from having so often been led into blunders about them. I shall look with great interest for his report on the military character of the whole frontier.

The produce of the Customs line at Meeaday is excellent.

I come now to Mr. Spears' budget from 3rd Feb. to 7th March. They are full of interest and importance.⁵ Their intelligence is in the highest degree satisfactory and encouraging, and we have apparently found a very safe and sensible and judicious correspondent. The purchase of grain has, of course, been approved. It would be a good stroke of policy to take it, whether we wanted it or not. I may mention that I have seen a letter from Captain Simpson to the Commissioner General in which he says that he has agreed for 20,000 baskets of wheat to be delivered at Prome from the above. This does not square either with the quantity which Mr. S says is available, or with his assertion that the King holds a monopoly of all grain. It would be well that you should communicate with Captain Simpson on the subject, if you have not already done so; lest you should be each unconsciously driving up the market upon the other.

I should regard Mr. Spears' packet as very encouraging, even if it should produce nothing out of the very promising passages regarding Mengdoon. On this you will be fully addressed officially. I add a few remarks in this private form. In your letter of 5th March you say Meng-doan is due west from Thayetmyo. I do not know whether the town of Mengdoon is at the southern end of the township. If it is *not*, then the Burman territory will extend considerably to the S. of our boundary at Meeaday. I presume, however, that this does not involve any serious military objection, else you would have noticed it.

The boundary at Meeaday, of course, must stand where it was laid down, and where I in person declared it to stand. It must also be carried up to the top of the hill on the west side of the river, where we saw our flag flying. After that point I have no objection to its being modified so as to meet the King's wishes about Mengdoon; provided always that there are no serious military objections, as I assume to be the case. I am very desirous of meeting the King's wishes; and I have modified the

Treaty so that the King cannot *in reason* object to sign the acquiescence in a boundary, which he has repeatedly acquiesced in by word of mouth. But these people do not always act in reason. If therefore he still refuses to sign even this expurgated draft, you must explain that as an officer of the British Crown I cannot give away a part of the possessions of the Crown, without obtaining an equivalent advantage for it.

If the King thinks that 'so small a thing' as a township should not stand in the way of friendship, he should not let 'so small a thing' as signing what he has already agreed to, stand in the way of a permanent friendship between the States. If the King thinks that I should make this concession of Mengdon Myo to him, I have a right to expect that he should make the far smaller concession of saying in writing what he has already said orally many times.

From the exceeding caution with which Mr. Spears guards himself against being supposed to 'have any authority' to hint at the possibility of a Treaty, I infer that the King *has* made some allusion to that possibility. If so, the last words of the King, quoted in the letter of the 7th, are significant, and encourage one to be sanguine.

Exhaust all your art to succeed, if you can. If you don't, no blame will be imputed to you. But bear in mind that for the King it is 'no song, no supper'—no treaty, no Mengdon Myo.

You will observe a remark in the official letter about a steamer which the King wishes for.⁶ Nothing more could be said there; but I will add here that if you think a steamer would help to tug through the negotiation, you may let them understand that the gifts after the conclusion of a Treaty would *certainly* include a steamer.

The whole of the 8th Irregular Cavalry will soon be with you. They are an excellent regiment.

There are several letters of mine which apparently had not reached you, when you wrote. They are of dates Feb. 11th and March 7th. Tell me, when you reply, if you have received them.

Believe me to be, Yours very truly,

DALHOUSIE.

¹ *Vide* Letter no. 85, note 3.

² *Vide* Letter No. 85, note 4.

³ In the letter in question (*vide I.S.P.*, Cons. 31 Mar. 1854, Nos. 17

and 18) Fytche made two suggestions to which the Governor-General gave unqualified approval:

(1) That power should be given to Deputy Commissioners to punish with severity any person taken in the act of insurrection.

(2) That Bassein should never be left without a steamer and gunboat.

The remarks complained of by Lord Dalhousie occurred in the passage wherein Fytche was elaborating his third suggestion that an irregular Police Corps should be raised. In his official letter of the 18th of March the Governor-General explained his objection to it thus:

'In the 12th paragraph of his letter the Deputy Commissioner contrasts the means which were at the command of the local officers under the Burman Government, with those which are given to the local officers at present, in a tone which cannot be understood otherwise than as one of complaint and condemnation.

'He states that under the Burmese Government there were 14 officers in the district, each of whom had under him "from 3 to 600 armed retainers". These officers, he adds, we "have replaced by Goung gyoops, and given them in place of these large bands of retainers two peons" (the only police in the country); and curtailed their authority to an extent which, contrasted with the power exercised by the Penengs under the Burmese Government, renders them ridiculous in the eyes of the people.

'I think it necessary for the credit of this Government to place upon record after the receipt of this despatch, my opinion that unless Major Fytche shall be able to show that he represented to his superiors the shortcomings which he alleges, for the information of the Government, and that he urged the precautionary measures which he now suggests, the implied condemnation of the measures of the Government in his 12th paragraph is unwarranted by facts.

'The Commissioner will be so good as to call for any such representation.

'In the meantime I have to observe on the part of the Government that there has been nothing whatever before it until now which could lead it to suppose that any such body of armed police was required in the Bassein district.

'Until I read this letter I have never heard that each Peneng or Myo Thugyee there had hundreds of armed retainers. Neither the Government collectively, nor I myself personally, ever heard of a wish for armed police in their place.

On the contrary, continued the Governor-General (the remainder of the letter is given here in abstract only), Bassein district was always represented to be in perfect quietude; so much so that 2 months ago he had issued a G.O. allowing persons at Bassein to take their wives and families there. The only place in Burma besides Rangoon for that privilege. When a few days later he visited Bassein and conversed fully and freely with the D.C. nothing was said of the necessity of armed police in the district. This was only 5 days before the disturbances broke out.

If it were the case that the presence of such armed police had been suddenly and unexpectedly found to be necessary, he was ready to sanction the embodiment for the present of 600 armed police in the Bassein district in place of the detachments of regular troops mentioned in the 11th paragraph of Major Fytche's letter.

Phayre was accordingly authorized to give immediate effect to this, and although with his customary parsimony he objected to the proposal as unnecessary, his objection was overruled by Dalhousie, who wrote in a minute of the 31st of March 1854 that notwithstanding the recent prompt and successful operations of detachments of regular troops against dacoity in Bassein, 'his Lordship in Council entertains a very strong objection to the breaking up of the regular troops into small detachments, either for frequent affairs of this kind or for posts. They should be kept in bodies; and such jungle work as these outbreaks require should be done by local forces, by whom they can best be done, as the Pegu Light Infantry has shown'. As none of the P.L.I. could be spared for Bassein Phayre was requested as a temporary measure to entertain the armed police suggested by Fytche. (*I.S.P.*, Cons. 31 Mar. 1854, Nos. 19, 21, 23.)

⁴ *Vide* Letter No. 85, note 5. Allan had sent in a long and detailed account of his trek along the frontier (*I.S.P.*, Cons. 31 Mar. 1854, Nos. 31, 32).

⁵ *Vide* *Introd.*, p. xlvii.

⁶ The remark alluded to was in the official letter of 31 March (*I.S.P.*, Cons. 31 Mar. 1854, No. 44). 'The Governor-General in Council observes the anxiety expressed by the King to possess a steamer similar to those belonging to the Government. It is impossible to sell him one of these. But if the King should sign a Treaty and full relations of friendship should be renewed, the Government might very fitly and advantageously present a steamer to His Majesty, as one of the ceremonial gifts which would no doubt be exchanged on the occurrence of such an event.'

98

Private. Govt. House, March 31, 1854.

My dear Phayre,

The despatches will go to you by Sesostris tomorrow. In the second article of the draft Treaty,¹ which is new, I have endeavoured to meet 3 different objects;

1st. to absolve the King from the necessity of signing an actual article of cession, as Article 2 of the former draft was.

2nd. to remove his fears that we would advance, by binding ourselves to preserve the border inviolate.

3rd. to gratify him by putting forward prominently his retention of Mengdon Myo.

I wish to add, however, that you are at liberty to alter the wording of this article, if you should find it expedient to do so; provided that it shall ultimately contain a recognition of the boundary such as cannot be evaded.

In the draft I have left a blank in which it is intended that you should insert a description in detail.

Yours very truly,
DALHOUSIE.

P.S. We have a telegraphic despatch of the news to 24th Feb. War seems certain.²

¹ *Vide I.S.P.*, Cons. 31 Mar. 1854, No. 40, for a copy of the amended draft.

² i.e. with Russia.

99

Poungday, 12 miles from Tapoon, March 21st, 1854.
My Lord,

I have had the honour to receive your Lordship's letter of the 11th of February. I march from this for Tapoon tomorrow morning, and I shall make every exertion to urge on the pursuit of Goung Gyee. There has been sad neglect during the last month.

Captain Smith has been obliged to leave. I trust your Lordship will approve of my nomination of Captain Grant to succeed him. Dr. Morton is Senior, but I do not think he would at all be able to manage affairs in Tharawaddy.

As soon as I reach Tapoon, I propose having two parties of troops out instead of one. Our enemy is an active one undoubtedly, but we make too much of him in sending bodies of 400 men against him.

I am preparing a report regarding Mendoon, which I hope soon to have ready. The people there were delighted to receive us. Notwithstanding the trouble Tharawaddy gives, I have every hope that the country will soon be tranquil.

Your Lordship asks about Captain D'Orgoni. Mr. Spears' information regarding him will in the mean time have been

received. I do not think he can have done any mischief. The King undoubtedly has imbibed from him the idea he is reported to have relative to the conduct of France at present; but I altogether considered Mr. D'Orgoni as scarce worth mentioning. He arrived in Rangoon two days before I left, and I did not consider, from what I heard of him, that it was necessary to address your Lordship specially regarding him. I am, My Lord,
with much respect your obedient servant,

A. P. PHAYRE.

My accounts from Rangoon state that the town is advancing rapidly. I am engaged in enquiries regarding catching wild elephants, which is, I think, of great importance. More than 20 of those elephants, which originally came, have died, and it is advisable to supply their places.

100

Rangoon, April 11th, 1854.

My Lord,

I arrived here yesterday afternoon and had the honor to receive then your Lordship's letters of the 29th and 31st Ultio. First regarding Mendoon. The town of that name is towards the Northern end of the district, and the Southern boundary of the Township lies about 20 miles South of the town. The Mendoon district extends Eastward to about half way between the Irrawaddy and the Arakan Mountains. I know of no serious objection, military or otherwise, to restoring this tract to the Burmese. I have a full report on it ready, but which cannot be copied out in time for the Sesostris. Be assured, my Lord, I will faithfully follow out your directions in this matter. I incline to think that the King would feel his position very much safer and stronger by having a treaty with us, and that he was only heretofore afraid of losing credit and position, should he sign away territory. By getting back Mendoon he will be able to save his credit, and this certainly should make him ready to do as your Lordship directs. In answering Mr. Spears' letter of the 7th March I desired him to tell the King that I had referred to your Lordship. I received on the 1st inst. a letter of the 18th March, a copy of which I likewise enclose.

I received, since I last wrote, your Lordship's letters of the 11th Feby. and 7th of March. I think the Irregular Cavalry can march without much inconvenience now. The troops returning from Toungoo last year did not get in until the very end of April, and did not suffer at all. I saw Mr. Scott at Prome. He was going up to Thayet Myo to lay out the garden there, and will be back here in about a fortnight to set to work here. Regarding the Pegu Lt. Inf. I have directed Major Nuthall to build temporary barracks for his men at Pongday, a place in the Prome district on the Northern border of Tharawaddee. It is a very healthy place, with a large population, where he will, I am sure, get plenty of recruits. When I formerly asked Major Fytche regarding the prospects of getting recruits in Bassein, he said that they would not like to leave the district—and I believe that is really the case. I am sorry to hear we cannot have Malays. They are very efficient men. I have just had an instance of their pluck, when a few of them in a gun boat under a Mr. Theodore were landed and acted ashore against Goung Gyee's men in the Southern part of Tharawaddee.¹

I send by this steamer a despatch regarding Tharawaddee, showing what has been left undone, and the plan I marked out for Major Nuthall and Captain Phillote of the 10th B.N.I. to do. A party was despatched from Rangoon to Tsanyway, a place at the Southern end of Tharawaddee, which was threatened by some of Goung Gyee's people: but before they could arrive, the Tsanyway people with the help of Mr. Theodore's Malays had dispersed the assailants.

Since the date of your Lordship's letter, my proposition for sending Captain Grant to Sarawah will have been received, and, I trust, approved of. Dr. Morton is much hurt at having been, as he says, passed over. But I did not consider him suited to the charge of so disturbed a district. As for poor Captain Smith he seems latterly to have gone distracted, and to have impressed the Commanding Officer of Tappoon with his ideas of Goung Gyee's invincibility. It is vexatious to think of the time that was lost from about the middle of February, and European troops and guns asked for, against a pack of fellows who will not face Native troops led by European Officers.

I have all along been of opinion that our regular troops should

never march without Burmese levies—I used them in going to Mendoon and I have directed them always to be used in Tharawaddee. I will carry out your Lordship's orders in this respect as regards Bassein. That is the district in which I did not consider a Police Corps required. Perhaps I err, My Lord, on the side of keeping establishments too low: I am aware it may be a worse fault than being lavish. I have a plan for the river police all ready, and my only difficulty is for a person to put at its head. I hope, however, to be able to send up the plan by the next steamer and to recall all the gunboats by the middle of June next, their place being supplied by these armed Police boats.

From Prome I wrote to Mr. Spears at once to purchase the grain at the King's own price. It is now early, and I have not been able to see Captain Simpson. I believe that he depends upon the word of some merchants in Rangoon. It is not easy to understand, however, how they can fulfil their agreement. In writing originally to Mr. Spears I merely asked him to make arrangements for wheat and gram deliverable at Prome. In reply he states that it is all in the hands of the King and is perforce obliged to refer to His Majesty. I will, however, see Captain Simpson on the subject.

There is one point which might perhaps be introduced into the treaty with propriety. In Mendon I appointed thoogyees and other officials. I fear they may be liable to be treated harshly. May I add an article to the treaty securing them from harm in consequence of any office they may have accepted from the British Government? If I receive an invitation, might I proceed to Ava to forward this matter? The Mahanaddy would take me up without difficulty, I believe.

Your Lordship mentions that the gift of a steamer to the King is noticed in the despatch. I conclude it is alluded to in Par. 2 of letter No. 46 dated 31st March. I have not found in any despatch any other sentence which could refer to it.

Your Lordship will be glad to learn that the last five months of the Rangoon Custom house have produced Rs.51,000. The Meeaday Custom House goes on yielding good returns. Rice has risen high at Prome from the quantity exported, but I have no doubt this lower part of the country can supply what is required there.

I find we must be more stringent still about sulphur; it evidently finds its way to Ava—and powder does to Goung Gyee from this—I will do all I can to stop this. I am, My Lord,
with much respect your obedient servant,

A. P. PHAYRE.

The MOUNG SHWE MOUNG, whom Mr. Spears mentions as appointed to Tsalane [Salin] (Chalain Mew of the map near Sembew-Ghewn),² was the Govr. of Padoung and gave us much trouble up to May 1853. This appointment has led to numerous reports, in the upper portion of the province, of armies marching down and so on. I need scarcely add that I consider such reports as mere talk. A.P.P.

I may mention, My Lord, that I have thorough confidence in Captain Brown now in Tharawaddee. He is a capital officer.

¹ One of the new arrangements made by Phayre at his meeting with Brown and Nuthall at Tapun to concert measures against Gaung Gyi was to station this gunboat at the mouth of the Tapun River.

² Hsin-byu-gyun (White Elephant island).

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My dear Captain Phayre, Ammarapoorra, 18th March, 1854.

I had last the pleasure of writing you on the 7th inst. by your own Boat, acknowledging the receipt of yours of the 12th ult.; and as the Boat left on the evening of the same day, I trust you have received it long ere this.

In my letter I mentioned to you that I thought F. Abbona would be sent down to speak to you about the boundary line on the West side of the river. But when we went to the Palace the following day, the King had changed his mind. He will not send any person down to speak about this business at present, but has determined to wait your answer to my last letter.

MOUNG BWA left for Yaemaythen on the 13th, and MOUNG SHOAY MOUNG took his departure on the same day for Tsalane. As soon as MOUNG BWA arrives at Yaemaythen, he has orders to send back all the troops stationed on that part of the border, excepting 500 men, who will remain with him as a sort of Police or Guard.

I have heard nothing about what MOUNG SHOAY MONG intends

doing, when he arrives at Tsalane; but I suppose that whenever the Maendoung business is settled, either one way or another, all the people collected down there will also be sent back to their villages.

Rice has gone up a little in price within the last few days: good cleaned Rice may now be quoted at 175 per hundred Baskets and Paddy at 56.

I have a great dislike to enter into any Statistical statement of the quantity of Rice grown in the Chendwen, as any information I may give you on that head at present, would be liable to error. We have no Collector's book to refer to here, and there is no account kept of the quantity that arrives from the different districts. A large quantity of rice is certainly grown up the Chendwen, but the greater part of it is sent down the river in Boats, and sold at the different villages between the entrance of the Chendwen river and Malon, very little finding its way up here. The country about Motshobo myow also produces a considerable quantity of rice. A part of this in the dry season is carted over the country to the villages on the west bank of the river (Erawaddy), say Kyouk myoung, She maga, etc., and from thence brought down to Ammarapoorra in boats. But the principal supply of rice for the Ammarapoorra market is brought down the river from Bomaw and the country lying a little to the Southward of it. We also receive considerable supplies from Toungebeck, that is, the country lying to the Southward of Ammarapoorra; it is brought in carts sometimes as far as a hundred miles, which renders it very expensive. Some of it even comes from the district of Yaemaythen; at least so I am told. This rice being much superior to any grown in other parts of the country it always fetches a good price. Besides all these different sources of supply for the capital there is no small quantity grown in the immediate vicinity. Our present market value for the different kinds of Paddy may be quoted as follows: Toungebeck, or from the districts to

the Southward of us	60	Tikals	per	Hd.	baskets
The average of what is grown near					
Ammarapoorra	57½	„	„	„	
Chenduen and Motshobomyow	52	„	„	„	
Bomaw and the country thereabout	50	„	„	„	

This may not be a very satisfactory account, but it is the best I can furnish you with at present.

We had little rain last year and consequently the crops were rather deficient. But the villagers not being so much oppressed with taxes as in the last reign, they have been able to reserve a considerable part of the former crop; so that I do not think there is any fears of a scarcity, much less a famine, for some time to come. The people formerly were so much pressed to pay taxes and other exactions, that they had generally to sell off all their paddy as it became ripe, and so had nothing to fall back upon; the case now is altered very much for the better.

Sulphur is rather a scarce article here, but still a small quantity of it finds its way up; the last that arrived, some four or five hundred Viss, was sold at 400 Ticals per 100 Viss. None of this article comes from China, although I have been told frequently by a certain person inside of the town, that it does.

I am happy to say that the Kyouk Maw Woongyee (now the Maquay [Magwe] Woongyee) has quite recovered from his sickness; and although not able to attend the Loot Daw regularly yet, he is able to go to the Palace every other day. He is a man much respected both by the King and Prince and his advice to them has always been to keep on friendly terms with the English.

The first public execution, that we have had since the King's arrival in Ammarapoor, took place yesterday. At the catching of a wild Elephant the prince's people got into a quarrel with the inhabitants of that part of the town where the Elephant trap is. The Myo-Woon, hearing of it, came to put things to rights, when the prince's people gave him chase, and it was with the greatest difficulty that he escaped with his life. This coming to the ears of the King, he got very angry and ordered four of the principal ringleaders to be executed immediately. It is said that about forty or fifty of the prince's people have been confined for this business. But I do not think that any more will be put to death.

I saw the King three days ago; he is still harping upon the Maendoung business, and although I do not think he will show fight to retain that part of the country, still, if it could be possibly given up to him, it would have the very best effect, and tend more than anything else towards the peaceful settlement of Pegu.

The bearer of this, Mr. Johanas an Armenian, is rather a decent sort of a man. Should you meet him, I have little doubt he will give you all the information he can; but as he does not always stick to the truth, you must be careful how you believe him. One of his sons is in the Prince's Service. And I remain,

Yours sincerely,

THOMAS SPEARS.

102

Rangoon, April 20th, 1854.

My Lord.

I beg to enclose copy of a letter dated the 2d inst., which I have received from Mr. Spears. As I had received from him a complaint mentioned by the King, regarding what had occurred on the Toungoo frontier, I thought it proper to give a memo. of Major Allen's statement. That is what Mr. Spears refers to at the commencement of his letter.

Your Lordship will observe what is said about the model Pagoda. I thought it would appear, to H.M. at least, fastidious to reply that I could not accept of the model Pagoda. I therefore requested that my respectful acknowledgments might be made.

I have seen Captain Simpson regarding his arrangement for grain. I certainly cannot reconcile the statements of those who state they can supply wheat at 100 Rs. the hundred baskets, with what Mr. Spears writes. I will in my next letter (which will be despatched tomorrow) refer to Mr. Spears on the subject.

Your Lordship may notice a statement in the Rangoon Chronicle about Meeaday having been burnt. I can only say I have heard nothing about it, and having enquired in Rangoon, I cannot learn that any person has received accounts from Meeaday to the 12th inst., the date when the fire is stated to have occurred.

I purpose my Lord going to Bassein as soon as possible. Dr. Forsyth¹ will accompany me to look at the site of the new city.² I am, My Lord,

with much respect your obedient servant,

A. P. PHAYRE.

¹ Dr. John Forsyth, Superintending Surgeon in Pegu, had entered

the Bengal Medical Service in 1820 and had had a very distinguished career on the North-Western Frontier.

He accompanied the Mission to Ava in 1855. In 1857 he became Director-General of Hospitals in Bengal. Two years later this title was changed to that of Principal Inspector-General. During the Indian Mutiny his organization of the medical department was specially mentioned by Sir Colin Campbell as of material aid in the final recapture of Lucknow. He was one of the first officers of the Indian Medical Service to be appointed Honorary Surgeon to the Queen (Sept. 1861). He retired from the service in 1862. Later he was knighted. (*Vide Crawford, History of the Indian Medical Service, 1600-1913*; London, 1914.)

² i.e. The projected new port, later named Dalhousie.

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Amarapoora, 2 April 1854.

My dear Captain Phayre,

I was favored with your letter of the 15th March on the 27th ulto along with a memo: of what had taken place on the frontier, etc., etc. The Memorandum I had translated into Burmese and gave it into the King's own hand to read. He went through it all, and then returned it to me, asking at the same time if I had shewn it to any of the Woongees. I told him that I had not. He then said: 'Well, do not shew it to them, but wait until Captain Phayre receives an answer from Calcutta about the Mengdoun business.' The King appears to have set his heart upon getting back that part of the country, and should the Most Noble the Governor General be pleased to return it to him, I have little doubt but that it would convert *him at least*, from being as he is at present, a very lukewarm friend, to say the least of it, to a sincere friend of the English. He says that he will attempt to do nothing against the English, even if he does not get it back; but at the same time he will look upon their refusal as a sign that they do not want to make friends with him.

I spoke to the King about the Dawk Boats, and requested him to allow me to keep two regularly employed between this and Prome, to be paid for by you. He was not displeased at this, but said: 'Why should Captain Phayre pay for them? I will keep two going myself regularly twice a month.' This order he has sent to the Lootdaw, but as yet I have heard nothing more about the Boats. Should they be put on, it will only be for a

short time; they will soon get tired of it. In the meantime it will perhaps be better not to have any regular Boats of your own, until we see what they are going to do themselves. But you may depend upon my hiring a small Boat, whenever there is anything particular to communicate, or when a long time elapses without any Merchants' Boats going, on which I can depend.

I have told the King that you feel obliged by his kindness in the matter of the Model Pagoda, and that you wished to send him up a small present by the way of showing your respect. He said: 'Very good, but the Pagoda must be first finished and sent away, when I will be most happy to receive anything that Captain Phayre may choose to send me.' He was thinking, I suppose, of your refusing the small presents sent by Father Abbona. The 'Singing bird' would do very well, but I will write you again, when the Pagoda is finished. You are right in supposing that it will be better to send something to the Prince at the time when you make the King a present. I have told the King that you have written to Calcutta about the Steamer, that he wishes to purchase. As it is not a War Steamer that he wants, I trust Government will not object to his being gratified on this point.

By this Boat I have addressed Captain Dickens, and have sent him the Basket (or rather box) used here for measuring all kinds of grain. I have tryed it with cleaned rice and find that its contents weigh 1775 Ticals, which will be about 64 lbs. English, but, of course, gram or wheat will not weigh so much. The hundred Ticals is about 140½ Tolla weight. You know the procrastinating nature of the Burmens; and although the wheat and gram is all but ready to be sent away, I do not think you will have any of it down before the end of the month or the beginning of May. The gram and wheat is to be all new; if there is any old or damaged, it is to be rejected. When the Boats do leave, I will give them letters to Lieut: Ardagh and Captain Dickens.

The King is going to try and make some revenue of lead. He has made large advances to some of the Shan Tsabwas in Cash, and as he can lay it down here at the rate of 8 *Rupees* per Hd. Viss, and would find no difficulty in getting the Merchants to take it at 15 *Ticals*, his profits will be very considerable. The

lead ore is said to be very rich; it also produces a small quantity of Silver. Should you be curious in these matters, I may be able to send you a specimen of the ore. About 30,000 Viss of this lead has just arrived, but I am afraid to say how much more is coming next month. The King speaks of many thousand Tons.

In my last I mentioned to you that four people of the Prince's had been put to death for some disturbance in the Town. Twelve more were taken out to the place of public execution the next day, but were pardoned and brought back again. The Prince took the death of his people very much to heart, and I was a little afraid at first that something serious might happen. But the Prince bore his chastisement like a dutiful subject and loving brother, and now everything is quiet again. The Prince slept at the Palace for ten nights after his people were put to death, only returning to his own house for a short time during the day. He is now very much quieter than he used formerly to be. The King's Government is, I think, very strong, and there is not the least danger of its being overturned by any revolution here. When at the Palace yesterday the King said to me: 'I have just heard that some English Troops are marching to Tougoo. I hope they are not going to make a further advance in that quarter, now that my own Troops have been ordered to withdraw.' I don't know whether he wanted to try me or not, but I answered him that I had heard nothing of the kind, and did not think there was the least chance of a further advance in that quarter; but that if such a thing should be contemplated, you would certainly let me know of it beforehand. I said that most likely some of the Troops in that quarter had been relieved, which might have originated the report. The Troops from Yaemathen are expected to arrive here on about the 20th inst.

You are perfectly right in supposing the wheat and gram to be rather dear; and I think you would do well not to enter into any contract for the next year, but to allow the Merchants here to purchase it from the King on the best terms they can. And as it must all go down the river, you would be almost certain of securing it for Commissariat purposes at a price certainly not higher than you will have to pay for this year's crop. The consumption here of both wheat and gram is very limited.

Many thanks for your kindness in sending me the 'Home News'. Two months [? ago] I wrote to Calcutta for the 'Englishman', but not a single copy of it has yet reached me.

This letter will go by a small Boat employed for the purpose of taking down the measure for the grain, and the people will be instructed to remain at Prome until letters are received from you in answer to this.

My last to you was of the 18th Ult. by an Armenian by name Johanas. He did not leave this until the 21st.

Enclosed is a separate letter about the compensation question. I trust that it will prove satisfactory.

And remain,
yours sincerely,

THOMAS SPEARS.

P.S. The cost of this Boat, 30 *Rupees*, I will carry to your account.

T. S.

P.S. I had almost forgotten to mention that the King had a daughter seven days ago by his second wife. She is a cousin of his, and the only remaining child of the present King's deceased Uncle, who, you will remember, was King at the time of the first War.¹ The King's principal Queen is a half sister of his own, full sister to the deposed King.² By her he had no children. Twenty days ago the Prince had a son by his principal wife, a half sister of his own.

T. S.

¹ i.e. Bagidaw Min.

² Pagan Min.

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Private. Govt. House. May 1st, 1854.

My dear Phayre,

I have received your letters of 21st March, of 11th, 20th and 20th [*sic*] April, also copies of Mr. Spears' letters from Amerapoora of 18th March, 2nd April.

I regret very much the still unsettled state of Tharawaddy, and still more that matters should have been made worse than they were, or need to be, by the mismanagement of the Deputy Commissioner and of the officer commanding at Tahpoon.

Captain Smith first asked for leave to England, which would

have vacated his appointment. He then asked 8 months leave to the Neilgherries. The last was given—but he was told that he would not in all probability be employed again as Deputy Commissioner. You have been asked directly whether he is fit for his office, and I do not think you can answer otherwise than in the negative.

Your nomination of Captain Grant¹ has of course been approved. I have never seen him, but I can't say I hear a very good account of him; and he did not impress Allen favourably when he passed thro' Calcutta on his way to Pegu.

Tharawaddy must have the best man that can be got; and for that purpose I would pay no heed to Seniors or Juniors or to anything but the highest qualities.

Your official report of Mengdon has come. I have read it with especial interest after the manifestation of such strong feeling on the part of the King regarding it. It has a little disturbed me. For, as you say the district extends from the border and is 30 miles long, it follows that it must run from 15 to 20 miles South of Thayet Mew. Is not that letting them rather too much into our rear? You seemed in your letter of 11th April to make light of the military objections; and I, of course, am not competent to appreciate them correctly.

I am still desirous of a Treaty, and would not hesitate to surrender Mendon in order to get it, if on full consideration you do not attach weight to the objection alluded to above. An article defensive of the people of Mendoon would be very proper.

I am very ill-pleased with Major Fytche's attempt to throw blame on the General for not giving him a police corps in Bassein.² He never asked it, nor hinted at it; and after my personal visit to his Head Quarters, I left with the impression full upon my mind that all was tranquillity; and my last words to him on board Zenobia were of compliment to him on the quiet of his district. He has now gone into the other extreme, and has officially reported that an army of 4000 men with guns was near Podangmew at the end of March, having passed close to you at Mengdon.

I reply to you frankly that I think your leaning is to keep establishments too low. I am aware of your motive and appreciate it. But I think a free expenditure to repress outrages,

which make much noise and do much harm, is good economy. I think you should have a strong river police. I think you should have a strong frontier police, and police wherever there is any probability of outbreak, as Major Fytche *now* thinks there is in Bassein. You will never defend the frontier from these dacoity forays without more precautions than the military posts. Captain Rennie spoke to me about recovering his men in order to complete his crew, with reference to the probability of men of war or Privateers skulking about in these seas when the war breaks out.³ I begged him to speak to you when he went down. I would by no means strip you of your gunboats; but for those, which are still necessary, supernumeraries could be entered on the Zenobia's books.

I observe in the P.S. to your letter of 11th April you say you have thorough confidence in Captain Brown. Why not make him Deputy Commissioner? or if you don't wish to do that, why not give him a separate and special charge of Tharawaddy as Major Abbott long had of Huzare?⁴

The three golden boats have arrived quite safe. I am much obliged to you for them. There is one thing omitted, however. You have not sent the *bill*, which I shall be glad to have. You were quite right not to reject the King's Model Pagoda. If you do not want it, send it up to the Toshakhan here,⁵ and any return present you may wish for will be sent to you. Any Curiosities—those large lacquered cases for their MSS. or anything, I shall always be glad to have; being a great collector of such household stuff.

With respect to the wheat I do not believe the Commissariat bargain will be implimented. At all events we will wait and see.

Regarding Malays it is not that you 'cannot have them' but that they cannot be got. The Ceylon Rifles are dying out as a Malay corps for that reason. They get 13 Rupees a month, and tho' they have recruited even as far as Labuan, they cannot get men. I was much pleased with Mr. Theodore's fight, and greatly diverted with his despatch after it—terse as Tacitus, and stern as Suwaroff.

I have consulted my colleagues on your question whether, if invited, you might proceed to Ava to further the Treaty. We are unanimous in thinking that you should not do so. If a mission

goes, it should go with a certain parade, and you can afford neither time nor steamers for that end. The main objection, however, is that it would betray too great a solicitude on our part. It is they who are seeking a favour. We are on the high ground. I think it good policy to maintain that ground; and I should doubt our doing so, if the Representative of the English Government were to consent, in a manner, to be sent for to Ava. I think a meeting at Meeaday would be the right thing; and if the old Woongee's liver is in order again, I should hope for better luck on this occasion than on the last.

Mr. Spears' letters are very intelligent and interesting, as well as business-like. His intelligence is very satisfactory, if it is correct, and everything that has yet occurred goes to show that it may be relied upon. The King's act in punishing the followers of the Eng-she-meng shews that he is Master, I think.

I have no news to give you; for I presume it can be no news to you to hear that we are fairly in for a war, of which no one can foresee the end or foretell the whole results.

Ramsay has been so ill that he has been obliged to sail today for England.

Believe me to be, Sincerely yours,

DALHOUSIE.

¹ To succeed Captain J. Smith as Deputy-Commissioner of Sarawah.

² Fytche had been called upon to write an official explanation of the passages in his despatch of the 18th of February complained of by the Governor-General in his D.O. of the 29th of March to Phayre. *Vide* Letter No. 97, note 2. His explanation and other collateral documents are in *I.S.P.*, Cons. 26 May 1854, Nos. 8-13, but do not call for further comment here, save that Fytche was undoubtedly right in drawing attention to the urgent necessity for larger police establishments. That he had carried his point with the Governor-General is clearly evident in the next paragraph of this letter.

³ i.e. The Crimean War.

⁴ This advice was acted upon. In July Henzada district was separated from Sarawah, and Brown became D.-C. of the latter with headquarters at Yegin. He was thus able to concentrate more effectively upon the reduction of Gaung Gyi, whose power collapsed during the next cold season of 1854-5.

⁵ Toshakhana—the office in which presents received by Government officers from native potentates etc. were deposited, and those to be given officially were stored.

105

Rangoon, May 1st, 1854.

My Lord,

Since the date of my last letter I have had no accounts from Mr. Spears. Nor have I had any public letters from Tharawaddee. From a private letter I received from Captain Brown dated the 20th Ulto, it appears that Goung Gyee was hiding. Lieut. Forlong writes that he has now fixed upon the whole line of road across the Toungoop Pass. By this date he expected to have a six feet track along the whole line with a gradient never exceeding 1 in 25, and which he expects to be able to reduce to 1 in 30. The road, he says, can be from 16 to 18 feet broad. He describes the hills as being in some parts very beautiful, and that at 36 miles from Prome there is more than one place suitable for a sanatorium.

There has been a very sad disaster, I fear, on the Sitang river of a portion of the 36th Regt. Mad. N.I. and some European artillery. There was a furious storm here on the 23d Ulto. and it is reported that 31 boats in which they were embarked are missing. We first heard of it by letters from Pegu, where some of the wrecked men (Sepoys) had arrived. They could give no account of the rest. I immediately had boats sent from this to search along the banks of the Sitang. I trust the loss is not so great as was at first supposed.

I leave this place for Bassein on the 6th inst.

I have letters from Major Nuthall, who is with the Pegu Lt. Infantry at Tahpoon in Tharawaddee. He says he cannot procure recruits there, and urges that he should be sent to Myanoung on the river. I will endeavour to manage this for him. Notwithstanding what is said by the Ceylon authorities, I trust it may be practicable to obtain Malay recruits through Lieut. Sanders at Penang and other places. I have written a letter upon this subject, which I hope your Lordship will approve of.

The Fire Queen is not yet in from Maulmain. Should I hear anything more regarding the accident on the Sitang river before the Zenobia leaves, I will inform your Lordship.

I am, My Lord,

with much respect your obedient servant,

A. P. PHAYRE.

106

Private. Government House. May 9th 1854.

My dear Phayre,

I have received your letter of 1st inst. The tidings you give of the loss, which it is feared we have sustained on the Sittang, is [*sic*] very distressing; and I wish to cling to the hope that, when more full news shall reach you, the loss may prove to be less than is now supposed. Considering how many steamers large and small were on the sea, full of troops and horses, there is good reason to be thankful that our misfortunes have not been immeasurably greater.

Your news from the Tounghoop Pass are very cheering—all the more so that Fraser has been writing despondingly about the hill road until very lately; and I did not know the reason. If Mr. Forlong is right in believing that healthy places can be found on those hills, it will be a priceless discovery. But I much fear he may have been misled by the cool air and beautiful scenery into thinking well of what may prove treacherous on closer acquaintance. I hope to have some enquiry made about the hills on the Sitang side this summer. Sir A. Bogle must do that.

I have received, since I wrote, the silver Casket from Prome. It is very pretty. All that is missing now is the 'little bill'.

By this mail have arrived your despatches about Police, etc. You have, I see, effectually got over the reluctance to increase establishments to which you alluded in your last letter! I think you are quite right, and doubt only about the Horse Police for Tharawaddy. This seems hardly necessary with so large a body of irregular horse at Prome. If, however, you consider it indispensable, it shall be done. When these three bodies of police in Bassein, Sarawah and Prome are organised, I hope that all petty detachments of regular troops may be dispensed with, and the force concentrated on the several main points of defence. I have no objection in the world to your getting Malay recruits for the Pegu Light Infantry, if you *can* get them on 10Rs. The Ceylon people declare it an impossibility; and therefore we shall get nothing out of them. The road from Dacca to Akyab is going

on beautifully; and if the road over the Tounghoop keeps the promise it is making, we shall be by the next relief independent of general service corps, so far as Pegu is concerned.

Yours sincerely,
DALHOUSIE.

107

Bassein, May 8th, 1854.

My Lord,

I am just approaching Bassein. Up to the time of leaving Rangoon I had not received any further communication from Mr. Spears. I have not also had any further intelligence regarding the boats lost on the Sitang river, except that Colonel Johnson, who was on his way to Toungoo, has escaped, and it is believed that many more boats have been saved than was at first supposed. I have now come round to Bassein to settle everything connected with the district, and I expect to remain about a month. I was anxious to have sent on to your Lordship, before I left Rangoon, the report on the levels of the country between Pegu city and the Sitang, which has been drawn up by Lieut. Campbell of Engineers. But Colonel Fraser has been subjecting it to close examination, and has not yet, I believe, decided in his own mind regarding it.

The export of rice, and salt still goes on beyond Meeaday. I have not yet heard of the arrival of the wheat and gram and [*sic*] Prome. I am, My Lord,

with much respect your obedient servant,

A. P. PHAYRE.

108

Government House. May 18th, 1854.

My dear Phayre,

I have had the pleasure of receiving your letter from Bassein; and as you talk of remaining there a month, I do not expect to hear anything more from Ava, until you return to Rangoon.

It is comforting to know that there are some probabilities still in favour of a less loss having actually occurred on the Sitang, than was supposed. At best it will be very sad. Your proposals for Police have been sanctioned; but you will see that I doubt

about the horse. General Steel has arrived here, and will go down in Fire Queen tomorrow. He is looking very hale and well. You see that we are fairly engaged in war. It will upset everything in this country cruelly.

Believe me to be, sincerely yours,
DALHOUSIE.

109

Bassein, May 16th, 1854.

My Lord,

I beg to enclose copy of a letter dated the 22d April last from Mr. Spears. I have not yet received any reply to my letter regarding Mendoon, nor has there been time for it. The letter from the Woongyee, which Mr. Spears enclosed, was written in a friendly style, but said not a word of Mendoon. It requested me to address him direct, or the members of the *Lwot-dau* [Hlutdaw], on any business great or small. I have replied to him in a short note, stating that I will address him (the Woongyee) on any matter, which may be necessary. I trust your Lordship will approve of this.

I trust soon to hear of the arrival of the wheat and gram at Prome.

I have not received any further accounts from Tharawaddy since I last wrote.

I am now engaged trying the people who got up the insurrection here in Jany. last.¹ The leaders were men of no note or influence—They got a few ruffians together, who looked for plunder, and by dint of terror they pressed a number of men to accompany them. I purpose remaining here for about twenty days more, and in that time shall have been able to accomplish all I have to do in the district of Bassein. Some few of the late insurgents are still lurking about in the jungles, but the district is perfectly quiet generally.

There has been a considerable export of rice to seaward, and this rainy season there will no doubt be a large quantity of paddy land sown.

Major Fytche, Dr. Forsyth and I have inspected the proposed site for a Town opposite Negrais. The ground has been cleared and appears in every way well suited for a settlement. Dr.

Forsyth is making a report thereon, and I trust your Lordship will approve of the station being moved there. As this will be an entirely new city, I beg to solicit your Lordship's orders as to the name it shall be called by—and I would beg respectfully to suggest that it might be called after your Lordship. I am, My Lord,

with much respect your obedient servant,

A. P. PHAYRE.

¹ *Vide* Letter No. 85, note 4.

110

Amorapoora, 22d April, 1854.

My Dear Captain Phayre,

The enclosed letter was delivered to me to day by the Kyouk-maw Woongee, with a request that it might be forwarded on to you by the first opportunity. I believe it is about the Maendoung business.

By this boat I have sent you a small basket of the coal I wrote you about before, it certainly looks a good deal like coal; but from the difficulty I have found in getting it to burn, I have my doubts about it. When you are at leisure, will you kindly give me your opinion as to its quality.

The King's lead continues to arrive from the Shan country; I have purchased 10,000 Viss of it from him at Ticals 16 per Hd. Viss.¹ It will just make a fair remittance. This year cotton crop has been plentiful, and would have sold as low as 25 Ticals per Hd. viss for clean, if the price had not been artificially kept up by the King, who is making all purchasers pay 35 Ticals per Hd. viss.

After making every inquiry I cannot find out the exact quantity of wheat and gram, that will be sent down this year. However, I do not think that the wheat will exceed 10,000 baskets; but the gram will be considerably more. Some of the boats have left this to take in their lading, and they may be expected down in the early part of the ensuing month. I trust you have found the basket, I sent down some time ago, for measuring the grain of the proper size.

My letters to you as yet not acknowledged are 18th March by

Johanes, 28th by your boat, 2d April ditto, 8th April by a Jew under cover to Mr. Moncrieff, 18th by a Burman ditto.

Everything is particularly quiet up here just now. I have not heard any thing more about the Siamese at Thebo myow [Thibaw]. But that they have made an eruption there, and have done some mischief, I have not the least doubt; it is said they have got a considerable number of Elephants with them.

If not sooner, you will hear from me by a small boat that will leave this on the 1st May. It will arrive at Prome on the 5th or 6th, and I will instruct the boatmen to leave that place on the 12th, unless you send orders for them to remain longer.

And I remain, Yours sincerely,

THOMAS SPEARS.

¹ It is interesting to compare this price for lead with its prices in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. On this subject *vide* Hall, *Early English Intercourse with Burma*, p. 203.

III

Private. Government House, June 5th 1854.

My dear Phayre,

I have received your letter of 16th May enclosing one from Mr. Spears of 22nd April. The accounts from Amerapoora, as well as from the Province, are satisfactory upon the whole. I look with interest for some reply about Mengdoon.

Fraser has arrived, and gives a good report of all matters in his hand, except a junction with the Bassein river. The Arracan road is particularly successful.

I earnestly wish that the completion of the Pegu Light Infantry and of the river police may be urged on vigorously; the first for obvious reasons, the other because the river at present draws off a considerable number of European seamen, and we may need them on board their ships.

The successful passage of the Diana thro' the creeks from Bassein, while the river was still low, was very encouraging. The report of the new site at the mouth of the Bassein river promises exceedingly well. But if we would not have it get a bad name from the first, we should proceed cautiously and gradually with the settlement. With respect to its name I am

very sensible of the compliment you propose to pay me by calling it after me. If the site had any name of its own already, I should advise you to hold by that; but as there is none, I see no objection to the proposal, which is similar to one just made from the Punjab, and I could, of course, only be gratified by it.

If in reply to our present dispatch (which can hardly reach you by tomorrow's mail) you still think it expedient to make the proposal officially, I will submit it to my colleagues. The road from Dacca to Akyab is getting on beautifully at last.

Believe me to be, Yours sincerely,
DALHOUSIE.

112

Bassein, May 26th, 1854.

My Lord,

I commence a letter now to your Lordship, lest from any delay on the road to Rangoon it should not be in time for the next mail. But I regret to say that I have not yet received any letters by the Sesostris Mail, which reached Rangoon on the 13th or 14th inst. I fear my letters have by some mistake been sent to Prome. I mention this lest there should be any subject, upon which your Lordship requires an immediate answer, and should be displeased at none being received.

I have not deemed it necessary to enter into any particular account of the proposed site for a town at the mouth of this river, because Dr. Forsyth showed me the draft of his report, which appeared to embrace every necessary point, and I fully agree with him in his opinion. There is now one Engineer Officer here, who will proceed to survey the ground and take the levels of it. I think an upset price for the lots, somewhat lower than what was fixed for Rangoon, might be put upon the land. Indeed, as it might be difficult to collect labourers, the price put upon the lots furthest from the shore might be merely nominal. The plan of the town might, if your Lordship approves, be generally similar to that followed at Rangoon. Regarding the name your Lordship would wish to be given to the town, I have already requested orders. The more I see of this place, the more I consider it to be advisable to establish the

Head Quarter station elsewhere, and the site now chosen ap[pears] to be the best at the mouth of the river.

Everything in this district is prosperous, and it will undoubtedly become a large grain exporting country. I have 53 prisoners under trial connected with the late disturbances, and some witnesses for the defence only now remain to be examined. They were, no doubt, encouraged in the scheme by people of influence at Ava, but there is no proof of this.

Since my last I have had no advices from Mr. Spears: indeed, in consequence of the mistake which, I fear, has occurred regarding my letters, I have not received a letter from Prome since my arrival here. All, I have no doubt though, is going on well, or I should have heard from Henzada. I am, My Lord,

with much respect your obedient servant,

A. P. PHAYRE.

113

Private. Govt. House, June 15th, 1854.

My dear Phayre,

I have received your letter from Bassein of 26th May and was glad to receive accounts of general quiet. It was rather a disappointment to hear nothing more from Ava about Mengdoon; but there is no help for it. It does not betoken, however, much amendment in the Post Office, if letters were sent to Prome which were meant for Bassein.

On the subject of the new town near Negrais, to which you refer, I have already replied. In laying out the town I would insist on the same regularity in plan as at Rangoon, and I see no reason why the same upset prices should not be put on building lots for warehouses, etc. But in establishing a totally new place you will probably have prejudices to overcome. I would not, therefore, increase the difficulties by imposing high prices for land for the *native town*. I think that there the rate should be quite a nominal one. I hear that the Diana is a failure; and that, built ostensibly for navigating the Panlang Creek, she draws above 5ft. water. Pray let me know if this is so.

I wish to revert to the subject of the steamers on the river, on which I spoke to you in January. They should be moved

during the rains if they are to be moved at all. It seems to me to be inexpedient to keep the *Enterprise* *up* the river, where she must be stationary for a great part of the year, when a smaller, and consequently a more useful, vessel exists. For that reason I conceive that *Enterprise* should go to Bassein, and change places with *Nemesis*. *Enterprise* is old and not fit to take the bay in the monsoon, but she is quite fit for seagoing work between Rangoon and Bassein; and she will be all the better suited for that station, now that it is about to be brought to the mouth of the river. *Nemesis* is, of course, not so well fitted for up-river work as the smaller class; but she is better calculated for it than *Enterprise*. When the new *Proserpine* is ready, I think one steamer—either *Enterprise* or *Nemesis*—should be kept always at Rangoon, ready to be dispatched on any service, such as the *Clarissa* lately called for. This done, and a steamer on the *Sitang*, we shall be complete.

We have had partial rains here.

Yours sincerely,
DALHOUSIE.

114

Bassein, June 11th, 1854.

My Lord,

I beg to enclose copies of letters from Mr. Spears dated the 8th, 18th and 30th of April, also of the 4th and 9th of May.

What is of principal interest is the letter enclosed in the last, showing they purpose sending an Envoy to your Lordship. No doubt they wish to glean some accounts both of European and Asiatic politics as they effect [*sic*] our power; and notwithstanding the idea they seem to have got hold of, as mentioned in the letter of the 30th April, the intercourse will do a great deal of good.

What Mr. Spears says of their wishing to wait and see how matters turn with England, France and Russia, before concluding a treaty, is no doubt true.

I have a letter in Italian from Father Abbona, which I also enclose to your Lordship after having had a very poor translation for myself, as I do not understand the language. I am, My Lord,
with much respect your obedient servant,

A. P. PHAYRE.

115

Amorapoorra, 8th April, 1854.

My dear Captain Phayre,

A Mr. Jacob Joshua has just come in to say that he starts in the afternoon for Prome, and although I have got little new to communicate to you at present, I do not like to let an opportunity pass without giving you a few lines.

When at the Prince's two days ago, he told me that he had found out a coal mine in the district of Tshemaga, and that he wanted to know what price could be got for that article in Rangoon. I told him that without a muster it would be impossible for me to say, but that if he liked, I would write and ask. The Prince wishes to have a sample of the coal used on board the steamers, so as to be able to compare it with that which, he says, he has found. If it is not giving you too much trouble, would you kindly send up some ten or fifteen pounds weight, mentioning at the same time the price it costs landed in Rangoon? The prince is amusing himself with assaying some copper ores he has found on the Tsagine [Sagaing] side of the river. They give from $2\frac{1}{2}$ to 10 per cent pure copper. The ore is represented to be very plentiful, in fact it is said that the hills on that side of the river are composed of little else. The prince caused some pieces of the ore to be shown to me, but not being a judge of those matters, I was made none the wiser by it. If you like, I can send you down a muster.

The King is still speaking about sending a dawk boat, and I know that your friend the Kyouk Maw Woongee has got a letter prepared to send you about the Maendoung business; but whether it will be sent or not, is more than I would like to pass my word for.

A great many people have died here of the small pox this year. The King got alarmed for his children, and so got Father Abbona to inoculate them. They are now all doing well.

My last to you was of the 2d. instant by a small boat. The boatmen have been told to remain at Prome, until they receive your instructions.

Everything is quiet up here, and with every prospect of remaining so.

Father Abbona and Mr. Camaretta desire to be respectfully remembered to you, and I remain,

yours very sincerely,
THOMAS SPEARS.

116

Amorappora, 18th April, 1854.

My dear Captain Phayre,

My last to you was of the 8th instant by a Mr. Joseph Joshua, and since then I have not had an opportunity of writing you.

Moung Toung Bo, the former Governor of Yamaethen, arrived here three days ago. The men that were under his command have also returned, with the exception of the 500 that I wrote you about before. The guns he had with him, and the artillery men, I have seen; the other troops I have not. But I am told on good authority that they have returned, and been sent to their villages.

Almost all business has been at a stand here for the last eight days on account of the new year; but the boats have now been hired for the grain, and I think it likely you may get the first instalment by the 5th of next month, certainly not after the 10th, unless something extraordinary takes place.

The King five days ago told me that he had heard of another eruption of the Siames in the direction of Thebomyow, a town situated about E. by N. of us. He has either sent, or is going to send, 2000 men into that quarter, with orders to surround the enemy, if they can, and take them prisoners; but at all events to drive them back again into their own country.

Yesterday when at the Palace I was told that a deserter from Meaday had arrived at Pagan. The Pagan Woon, Mong Tso, has petitioned the King that he wishes to enter his service, and I believe a boat has been sent down for him. The deserter gives himself out to be an engineer.

Should you have no objections, I will send a small boat from here on the 1st of every month. It will arrive at Prome on the 5th or 6th, according to the wind and weather it may meet with on the passage, and can leave Prome again for this on the 11th or 12th. Should any other day answer better for the boat leaving this, be so good as to let me know, and it can be altered to any

day of the month you like best. But I will start one on the 1st of May with orders to leave Prome for this on the 12th. Should you wish it to remain a longer or shorter time, you will have little difficulty in communicating with the authorities at Prome.

I have not heard a word more about the Burman dawk boat, so I think it likely they will send none. Should there be no merchant boats leaving this before the 15th, I will try to get a small boat to start then. But I will advise you of this by the boat that will leave on the 1st instant.

Everything up here is quiet. The Mail of the 25th January, announcing the fleets of England and France having entered the Black Sea, has been received here, and some parts of it translated for the information of the King and Prince.

The Model Pagoda is in a state of progress, but it will take some time yet to finish it.

The bearer of this starts at once, and is waiting until I finish the letter, so excuse haste, and I remain,

yours sincerely,

THOMAS SPEARS.

117

Amorapoorra, 30th April, 1854.

My dear Captain Phayre,

I had last the pleasure of writing you on the 22d instant, giving cover to a letter that the Qyouk Maw Woongee requested me to forward on to you. I thought it was about the Maendoung business, and only found out my mistake two days afterwards, on the Woongee showing me a copy of it at the Loot daw. A copy of the first letter, that they intended to have sent, was shown me long ago, and not having heard of their writing another, I very naturally thought it was the same.

The boat, that took down my letter of the 2d instant, returned on the 25th, and by it I received letters from Lieutenant Ardagh and Captain Dickens. Lieut. Ardagh says that he had forwarded a letter of yours to my address 'by boat' about a week previous to the time of his writing; but as this letter has not yet come to hand, I am afraid that something must have happened to the boat on the road, more particularly as the weather has been very stormy for the last twenty days.

The *Thebo* Maentha (Uncle to the present King, and half brother of his father) has been appointed Commander in Chief of the King's forces in the Shan country. He is to leave this in a day or two, with 1500 foot and about 200 horse. Monaey is to be his head quarters, where he will remain to watch the motions of the Siamese and the Shans, that are under them. Besides the men he takes with him, he has orders to raise five hundred more, when he arrives there. *Koonta*, one of the most powerful tsabwas in the Shan states under the Burmese rule, has likewise been directed to supply him with 5000 Shans; these, with the troops that have gone on before, will numerically make up a very respectable force. You must, I think, have heard of this *Koonta*. He was in open rebellion all the last two reigns, and only gave himself up to the present King, when he was at Shoey Bomyow.

When at the Palace on the 24th, I was shown (by the King) a letter, that had been addressed by Major Allan to Mong Po—also a copy of Mong Po's answer to him. Is it quite certain that Mong Po has been driving away the population of whole villages from the English side of the boundary?

The King does not believe it, but at the same time it is not at all likely that Major Allan would accuse him of doing so, without being perfectly satisfied of the fact. There is some talk of Mong Po's being called up, but nothing is settled as yet.

The King and Prince have got it into their heads at present, that you will not be able to retain Pegu for a year; not that they have got the least intention of trying to drive you out, but that they think you will be forced to withdraw all your troops for the defence of Hindostan, at present (it is supposed by them) threatened with a terrible invasion of Russians, Persians, &ca., &ca. They have formed this opinion from having parts of the Calcutta and Rangoon news-papers translated to them by their people, who always pick out the pieces they think will please most, exaggerating as much as possible any thing they think may tell against the English. Two of the Armenians at present here are doing a great deal of harm in this way. They don't call themselves British subjects now, but say they belong to Russia.

The King still continues to express the most friendly feeling towards the English, but he has got many bad advisers. However,

there is one thing that you may, I think, be perfectly sure of, and that is, that he will never attack you. This is not only my opinion, but the opinion of F. Abbona also.

Father Abbona has received a Rangoon paper of the 8th instant, which he is translating, and will take into the Palace tomorrow. It is mentioned in it that the Afgahans had made overtures to Major Edwards at Pishwar, offering to join the English against Russia and Persia, if they should attack India in that quarter. As the would-be politicians here put great stress on the Afgahans being on the side of Russia, we will see what they have got to say to it, now that the newspapers have made them change sides.

The King generally twice a month makes the round of the stockade outside of his Palace for the purpose of allowing any person to petition him, who may think that justice has not been done him at the Lootdaw or any of the other Courts. He has generally got a dozen petitions presented him every time he comes out. Amongst the petitioners the other day was an old woman, whose son had been murdered some three months ago. The murderer had been apprehended a few days ago [*sic*] he had perpetrated the crime, and put in confinement; and notwithstanding that his mother had made various applications to the Lootdaw that justice might be done her, she had always been put off on some pretext or another. The King upon inquiry, finding that the old woman's story was true, ordered the Officers of the Lootdaw to pay the price of blood, 300 Ticals, for their carelessness in not seeing justice done her at once, with 50 per cent more, making in all 450 Ticals. Of this sum the Heir Apparent, being the head of the Lootdaw, had to pay 150 Ticals, and each of the Woongees 50. The Woondaks 25 each. The murderer not having any money to pay, after being marked on the forehead, was handed over to a Pagoda to be a slave for life.

There is some talk of Mr. Camaretta going down to Malonmyow to establish a custom house there. At present no duty is levied on any goods that are sold below Ava, but all that arrive here pay a duty of 10 per cent in kind, besides that there is another charge of 2 per cent called goin. No duty as yet has been charged on any exports, but as soon as the custom house is put on at Malon, there will be a duty charged of 6 or 6½ per cent.

I had just got so far, when your man handed me your letter of

the 4th April. I had intended to send this by a dawk boat tomorrow, but as your man says he wishes to leave to-day, I will send it by him and retain the other boat until the 3rd or 4th (certainly not longer), so that I may be able to answer your letter by it. I will always send a boat away from here on the 1st of every month.

I will see the King tomorrow and let him know what you say. I spoke to him some days ago about Mong Po and I will certainly do so again.

As I will be writing you in a day or two, I will say no more at present. But remain,

yours very sincerely,

THOMAS SPEARS.

P.S. My letters to you, not yet acknowledged, are 2d April and 8th April, 28th March, 18th April, 22d April.

118

Amarapoorra, 4th May, 1854.

My dear Captain Phayre,

I had the pleasure of writing you on the 30th ultimo, acknowledging the receipt of your letter of the 4th. The boat, I am now writing by, I had hired with the intention of sending away on the 1st. But as the man, who brought up your letter, wished to return immediately, I made over the packet to him, and retained this boat until now in the expectation of having something of importance to communicate to you.

The extract from your Calcutta letter was translated and given to the King the day after I received it. It pleased him very much. After he read it, it was sent to the Lootdaw for the Woongees to give their opinion upon it. This they must do in a few days more. It is very likely, I think, that an envoy will be sent to Bengal; but until the Woongees have given in their report nothing certain can be known. The Maguay Woongee, I know, is in favour of sending.

I have told the King what you say about the bazar at Maeday being attacked by robbers. He answered me that he was very sorry to hear it; that it was contrary to his wish, and the orders sent to Mong Po; that the only way he knew how to account for it,

was that it might have been done by some people formerly under Mong Po's orders, but who had now left him. You can tell Captain Phayre, he said, that some time ago, orders had been sent from this to punish three petty Officers at that time in Mong Po's force; that they, having heard of it, ran away, and that it is not at all unlikely that it might be some of them, who had committed the dacoity. If this is true, it may account for their being called Mong Po's people. The King also said: 'When you next write to Captain Phayre, ask him to get the names of the men engaged in this affair, if he possibly can, also the villages they belong to; and if they are on this side of the boundary, they will very soon be caught and punished.'

Yesterday after coming out of the Palace I saw Maguay Woongee, and had a long talk with him. He says that the 550 men, that still remain of the force to the northward of Toungoo, are to be withdrawn, and that fresh orders have been sent to Mong Po to keep himself *very quiet*, if he wishes to retain his situation.

If you have no objection, I should like to make up my account with you at the end of every four months for boat hire, etc. Be so good as to inform me from what date I am to draw my salary. It should be about the 1st of January, I think. Will a simple statement be sufficient? Any money, I have got to receive, I would like paid to my Rangoon agents, Messrs. Johnstone and Barlas.

The Model Pagoda is getting on very slowly; the stone cutters, not being accustomed to that kind of work, find it a much more difficult task than they expected. Besides this, the King by taking the first stone that arrived (which had been paid for by me), has put me out of my calculation at least a month. His pagoda will be finished before mine.

From the monsoon having set in, a small boat and five men now cost 40 Rupees, which is the hire I have paid for this boat. It will reach Prome on about the 9th, remain there for a few days, and then return. I will send away a similar boat on the 1st of every month, and trust my other letters to merchant boats, until I get the King's consent to establish a regular dawk.

Father Abbona tells me that he will write you by this opportunity.

Some of the wheat is *actually* on board the boats and will leave

this in a day or two. A man of the King's will accompany it to Prome for the purpose of seeing it measured and receiving the money. I will furnish him with letters to Captain Dickins and Lieutenant Ardagh. The weather has been oppressively warm for the last fortnight, the thermometer in the afternoon ranging from 96° to 100°.

I trust I may soon have the favor of hearing from you ; in a few days I will write again, and let you know how things are getting on.

Yours sincerely,

THOMAS SPEARS.

119

Amarapoora, 9th May, 1854.

To Captain A. P. Phayre,

Commissioner of Pegu, and Agent to the Governor General.
Sir,

By request of the Woongees at the Lootdaw, I have the honor to communicate as follows :

The Woongees beg to say they have received from the writer of this the extract of your Calcutta letter,¹ accompanied by a Burman translation. That this translation has been laid before His Majesty the King, who has expressed himself well pleased that the Most Noble the Governor General is satisfied that he is sincerely desirous of an honourable peace.

That His Majesty the King, the Heir Apparent, and all their Counsellors agree in thinking that the best way to bring about a settlement of the differences, now existing between the two countries, will be to send an envoy of rank to Calcutta, to treat in person with the Governor General.

That as the Woongees have not settled yet who will be the fittest person to undertake this mission, they beg to decline writing officially at present. But in the course of ten or fifteen days, when all these matters are arranged, they propose doing themselves that honor. They will then let you know the time when the envoy may be expected at Meaday, so that you may have things in readiness to receive him, as promised in the 'extract'.

The Woongees beg to say that they will do everything in their power to promote a friendly feeling between the two countries.

And they trust you will on your part do all that you can to assist them in the matter.

I have the honour to be, Sir,
your most obedient servant,
T. S.

Note.

This is the letter as it was originally ; but I believe some alterations will be made in it. When it is sent, it will come in their own dawk boat.

THOMAS SPEARS.

¹ *Vide supra*, Letter No. 97.

120

Amarapoora, 12th May, 1854.

My dear Captain Phayre,

I have to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 15th April, it came to hand on the 8th instant. Your official letter of the 14th ultimo, accompanied by the draft of a treaty, I have also had the honor of receiving.

As the King and his Ministers are still speaking about sending an envoy to Bengal, I will, in accordance with your letter to me now under acknowledgment, not make them acquainted with my having received the draft of a treaty from you, but wait on a little longer and see what they are going to be about. Should an envoy be sent, you may be pretty certain the Maguay Woongee will be the man.

The Woongees are going to answer the extract of your Calcutta letter, received here on the 30th ultimo; and as they do not wish to write themselves, they have been keeping me running about the Lootdaw for the last three days, vainly endeavouring to write in their name a letter that will please all parties. Yesterday I thought I had done it, but when it was shown to the King, some other alterations were required. A copy of this very interesting epistle I now enclose.¹

Father Abbona's opinion is that an envoy will be sent to Bengal, but not immediately; perhaps in a month or two hence. Should our next Europe mail announce that the Russians had acceded to the terms proposed by France and England, or, in

the event of war, Russia had been well thrashed, things would progress here a little faster.

My opinion is that they want to put off a definite settlement of affairs, until they see how matters in Europe and the northwest of India are likely to be affected by the war; not that they will commit any aggressive movement on their part, even if things were to get unsettled in India. But in the event of that country being troubled, they think they may be able to get better terms *then* from the Bengal Government, than they are likely to get *now*. This being my opinion, I have thought it better not to say a word about the draft treaty at present.

The only remaining son of the Tsakyaw maen has been foolish enough to try and get up a party on his own account. One of his people went and informed against him, and the whole gang amounting to about forty men have been taken up and are now in gaol. From the mild character of the King, I am in hopes that none of them will be put to death, the most of them have had already a most unmerciful beating. The Tsakyaw maen was the only son of the present King's uncle, King of Ava during the first Burman war.

Some of the wheat and gram leave tomorrow. When the money is paid to the King's people (who will accompany the boats to Prome), they are to proceed on to Calcutta for the purpose of purchasing a few things for the use of the King. About 20,000 Rupees' worth of lead is also to be sent to Calcutta for the same purpose.

I wrote you some time ago that the Siamese had made an eruption into the Burman territories. The report now is that they have been driven back, or, as some say, have returned of their own accord. Abbona tells me that he is of opinion that they were a party of Cocheen Chinees, and not Siamese at all. However this may be, the Thebomaentha is still here.

The Burman, who brought up your last letter, got his boat swamped on the way up, and all his provisions damaged; so I have given him ten Rupees worth of silver and will carry it to your account. As this boat was hired by Lieutenant Ardagh, I will advise him of my having paid the money.

I will most likely write you in a few days hence by the Woon-gees' dawk boat. But I would not advise you to send up anything

of importance by it. You will always be certain of a boat of your own leaving this on the 1st of every month, And believe me to be,
yours very sincerely,

THOMAS SPEARS.

¹ *Vide supra*, Letter No. 119.

121

Bassein, June 11th, 1854.

My Lord,

I have received your Lordship's letters of the 1st, 9th and 18th of May, which, from my letters having been detained at Rangoon, reached me within a few days of each other.

I have by this opportunity sent an application regarding Tharawaddee being put under Captain Smith,¹ as suggested by your Lordship. I am convinced it is the very best arrangement which could be made. Affairs are improved there but we must be careful that the river is kept clear this monsoon. I have reason to be quite satisfied with Captain Grant, and I feel assured he will continue to do well. Poor Captain Smith had certainly become latterly quite useless and I have been obliged to say so. This district is going on very well, and Major Fytche has commenced recruiting for his Police Battalion. I hope they will not too much interfere with Major Nuthall's plans, and I do not think they will. The mounted branch, My Lord, I only applied for to be in Tharawaddee on the supposition that it was your Lordship's wish to keep the Irregular Cavalry together on the frontier. I do not think that the frontier of Mengdon running some 15 or 20 miles south of Thayet Myo will at all matter; we can establish a post of observation at the point where it joins the Kama district inland. But with our post at Bangoon, West of Thayet Myo some 18 miles, no *force* could assemble in the Mengdon territory without being heard of. Then as to a military objection it would simply be, that giving up Mendoon would enable the enemy desiring to enter our territory to march some 25 or 30 miles longer in their own country, than if the boundary remained as now arranged. But not to mention that we could always have information of the assembly of a force, it could be intercepted by one advancing from the direction of Namayan, before it could reach Padoung, in which direction its march would be.

The boats for the river police are now all ready, and a few have been dispatched to their stations. The remainder will be, when I return to Rangoon. I think that after the police boats and gun boats have been together a month or so, that the latter may then safely be withdrawn.

I have concluded the trial of 53 of the men concerned in the late insurrection here; and I regret to say that after the prosecution had been gone through and I was waiting for some witnesses named by some of the prisoners, that 13 of them (the worst characters) escaped from jail. There were two sentries, one European and one Native, over them at the time. Only two as yet have been recaptured, but I have strong hopes of getting hold of the rest. Major Fytche is unfortunately laid up with a broken collar bone, but every possible exertion is being made to take them.

I have written to Mr. Spears for some Burmese articles for the Paris exhibition, and I will at the same time write for some of the lacquered bookcases your Lordship mentions. The price of the boat models was 140 Rs. and of the silver casket Rs. 110. Mr Spears mentions the model pagoda ordered by the King as having interfered with the finishing of that he himself ordered. I will send it up to the Tosha Khana as soon as it arrives, and I have asked Mr. Spears what will be a suitable return present.

I was very sorry to hear that Major Ramsay had been obliged from sickness to go home.

In Father Abbona's letter there is a reference made to a letter written by Major Allan on the frontier, the style of which the King took a little offence at. I have explained that this was the fault of the translator and was not intended.

I think it probable the Burmese, if we come to a treaty, may make it a point to press for the free import of *sulphur*, if not of gunpowder. I should be obliged if your Lordship would favour me with your orders on this point.

I am, My Lord,

with much respect your obedient servant,

A. P. PHAYRE.

¹ This is probably a slip of the pen; Brown is here meant. He had been placed in charge of the township of Tharawaddy. (*I.S.P.*, Cons. 28 July 1854, No. 1.)

122

Rangoon, June 21st, 1854.

My Lord,

I beg to enclose copies of letters dated the 18th of May and 1st of June from Mr. Spears. It appears that the King has determined to send an envoy to your Lordship with presents. I shall be careful that the envoy is received on the frontier with becoming respect.

Mr. Spears recommends that when I acknowledge the intended present of the King, I should send in return one of the 'singing bird' toys, also a flint gun, made light, or a gold watch to the Prince.

Your Lordship will notice what is said regarding the King sending articles to the Paris exhibition. Will there be any objection to this being done? The King can scarcely have any but a political object in view; still, as affairs stand at present it might be permitted, if done through our Government. I should be much obliged if your Lordship would be pleased to give me directions upon this point. I am, My Lord,

with much respect your obedient servant,

A. P. PHAYRE.

123

Amarapoora, 18th May, 1854.

My dear Captain Phayre,

I have this day written you a letter by order of the King and Lootdaw, a copy of which in Burmeas and English has been retained by the Woongee.¹ This letter has been sent by the *first* Burman dawk boat under cover to Lieutenant Ardagh, Prome, to whom I have written requesting that he will acknowledge the receipt of it by the same boat on its return.

Father Abbona desires to be remembered to you, and I remain,

yours very sincerely,
THOMAS SPEARS.

¹ *Vide* Letter No 124.

124

Amarapoora, 18th May, 1854.

To Captain A. P. Phayre

Commissioner of Pegu and Agent to the Governor General.
Sir,

At the request of the Woongyees at the Lootdaw I have the honor to communicate as follows.

That the Woongyees have received from the writer of this the extract of your Calcutta letter accompanied with a Burman translation. This translation has been laid before His Majesty the King, who expresses himself well pleased that the Most Noble the Governor General is satisfied that he is sincerely desirous of an honourable peace.

That His Majesty being desirous of cultivating that feeling of friendship, which he think[s] is apparent in the extract of your Calcutta letter, has determined in sending a man of rank to Calcutta with presents to the Governor General.

The Woongyees being so busily engaged at present in superintending the preparations for the King's coronation—which will take place in about forty days hence—that they have not as yet had time to settle who will be the fittest person to undertake this mission. They therefore beg to decline writing you personally now; but when things are all arranged, they propose doing themselves that honor. They will then let you know the time when the mission may be expected at Meeaday, so that you may be prepared to receive it in the way promised in your letter.

From the monsoon having set in, the Woongyees are of opinion that it may be hardly safe for the mission to venture round to Bengal before the month of August.

The Woongyees say that they will do everything in their power to promote a friendly feeling between the two countries. And they trust you will on your part do all that you can to assist them in the matter.

I have the honour to be, Sir,
your most obedient servant,
THOMAS SPEARS.

125

Amarapoora, 1st June, 1854.

My dear Captain Phayre,

On the 28th ulto I had the gratification of receiving your letters of the 21st April, and beg leave to thank you in particular for the one that treats about my compensation money.

Before giving you the news of the palace—not very interesting by the by—I will answer your query about the wheat. With all due difference [*sic*] to the experience of Captain Simpson as a Commissariat Officer, I think some person must certainly have been hoaxing him when they promised to supply him with either a large or small quantity at 100 Rs. per 100 baskets. It is my opinion that no person can furnish him with either wheat or gram this year at any price, the whole of the crop, as I wrote you before, having been purchased by the King, and strict orders sent down to Mong Tso, Myet tsan Woon,¹ not to let any gram pass without a Lootdaw order. It is possible that a small quantity may be smuggled: but this I do not think at all likely. However, supposing it to be smuggled, the Burmese are not such fools as to sell an article for 100 Rupees when they could easily get 200 for it.

The King at the commencement of the year, before the seed was put in the ground, advanced for wheat at the rate of 60 Ticals per hundred baskets, and now he is paying for that portion, on which advances were not made, at the rate of 100 Ticals per hundred baskets. All the wheat is not grown on the river side, but generally a little distance inland, and it costs from 5 to 10 Ticals, according to distance, cartage before it reaches the boat. Besides this, the people employed in superintending the receiving and delivery of it will require to be paid something. Add to all this the freight, 20 Ticals per Hd. baskets, which has been paid on that already forwarded to Prome, and you will find that the wheat, when delivered, will stand the King in very nearly 150 Rupees per Hd. baskets.

On my arrival here in January, long before I heard from you on this subject, I had written my agent in Rangoon to make inquiries as to what price I might expect to get, if I sent a large quantity of gram down. I did not know then that the King had

been making advances, but by some mischance my letter was a long time in reaching Rangoon, and the answer to it, equally unlucky, was nearly two months in coming to hand here. Captain Simpson's offer then was 150 Rupees per Hd. baskets of wheat. But having found out in the meantime that both wheat and gram had been monopolized by the King, and being utterly unable to send it down at that price, I at once rejected the offer. About fifty days ago from my letter not having then reached Rangoon, my agent could not give Captain Simpson a decisive answer, so getting rather impatient he wrote my agent the enclosed note making particular inquiries after the gram. This is all the light that I can throw on the subject, but I do feel a little curious to know who the person was that promised to land wheat at Prome or Rangoon for 100 Rs. per Hd. baskets.

A considerable quantity of the wheat and gram left this for the Prome Commissariat on the 14th ulto. Enclosed is a copy of the letter I furnished the men with, that have got it in charge. On a previous occasion I wrote Captain Dickens, in answer to a letter of his grumbling a little at the high price, that I thought the gram would turn out more than the wheat, and that if it did so, he was at liberty to reject the overplus. I have informed the King that only equal proportions of the gram will be taken, and he has instructed his people to sell what may be over at the market rate of the day, if it should be refused by the Commissariat. I may as well mention that I think you will find the average of wheat in the Rangoon market for the last ten years will range from 150 to 300 Rs. per Hd. baskets. I have known it shipped to Maulmain at the latter price.

I have studied attentively your official letter of the 14th April with the draft treaty attached, and upon mature consideration think it better not to say anything at present on that subject to the King or his Ministers. But I have, in following out your instructions, let them know that I thought it likely, if they were to send an envoy round to Bengal, and come to an understanding with the Most Noble the Governor General, that they would perhaps get the country of Maendoung back again. Three days ago the King was speaking about sending an envoy to Bengal with presents for the Governor General. He says he will do so immediately after his coronation, which will take place on the

6th of the waning moon, that is fifteen days hence. As this was only mentioned in conversation, it perhaps cannot be exactly depended upon, but I have little doubt a man will be sent round long before the time mentioned in the Woongyees' letter of the 18th ulto.

Mong Po the Maeday man has been appointed Governor of Maloon, this will place him further from the frontier than his last command. He has been ordered to keep everything as quiet as possible: should any well authenticated instance of his people being engaged in dacoities be brought to light I do not doubt but he will lose his situation.

When you send the Prince a present—after the King has forwarded his model Pagoda—you might give him a double barrelled gun; flint locks would be preferred, with barrel 36 inches long, and of a light make. The Burmens do not admire heavy guns. But if this should not be suitable, then a good gold watch would do very well. I have seen some that play short airs. The singing bird you spoke of before will do for his Majesty.

I will forward you a muster of the lead and copper ores as soon as I can get them.

It is the Siamees after all that have been attacking the Eastern frontier. A Petition arrived from the Shan country three days ago. Some fourteen days ago a battle is said to have taken place at Kiaintoun as it is called in a very old map that I have got, but the Burmese write the place ကြိတ်တုံ. The fight is said to have gone in favor of the Burmeas (but you know bulletins are not always to be depended upon) who captured a few elephants; four guns and a quantity of muskets, besides making a good number of prisoners, who after being disarmed were allowed to return to their own people. On putting some of the prisoners to the question, they gave out that the opposing forces consisted of 20,000 foot and 1000 horse led by the King of Siam's brother in person. Should the Burmeas drive the Siamees back, as I have no doubt they will do, they will not follow up any advantage they may get at present, but only send forces sufficient to keep the enemy in check, the Shan country during the rains being very fatal to the Burmeas troops. But as soon as the rains are over, they will follow up any advantage they may get. The

The bo Maentha [Thibaw Mintha] leaves this on the 4th for Monae,* but he will not take more than a thousand men with him. A considerable force, I believe, is there already. The King the other day in speaking about the Siamees said: 'They think now that the English have taken nearly half my country, that I have not even power to resist *them*, but they will find themselves much mistaken. The English in taking the lower country have certainly deprived me of a large revenue, but the fighting men have always been drawn from the country still under my charge, Pegu only supplying boatmen, who could be of no use at any time in a Siamees war'. Should the Siamees country be invaded in the cold season, *it will be more to the southward than the place they are fighting at just now.*

I have told the King about the Great French Exhibition. He appears to understand what it is intended for, and says that he will send a number of things there on his own account. *He speaks* of sending to the value of a lack [*sic*] of Rupees. The people are getting on with the five putsoes² I wrote to you about before. Besides they are making a kind of a silk tablecloth with all manner of Burman beasts worked into it, the cock not being forgotten amongst the rest. When you answer my first letter, that is my letter of the 12th May, on this subject, I wish you would give me some sort of an idea of the value of the silver articles wanted. If you want cups, what size and weight etc.? I will not answer for the *Shew* the articles, that come from here, will make; but you may depend on my doing my best.

I had almost forgot to mention to you than when in the Palace ten days ago, the King told me and Father Abbona that one of his people had just returned from Maulmain, and had reported to him that the Siamees had been there with presents for the Governor, ten elephants and some other things, requesting that the English would assist them to fight against the Burmeas, and that the Governor's answer was, we are not at war with the Burmeas, neither are we at peace with them, so that we can't assist you just now. With which answer they returned, their presents being refused. Is there any truth in this?

Rice has got up a little lately in price; cleaned is selling in the Bazar at 2 Ticals good silver per basket. And cargo rice from Pegu 130 Youtnee per hundred baskets;† it has got about 15

per cent of paddy in it. The boat, by which I am now writing, cost 40 Rs.; it will remain at Prome until the 13th. If any other day will suit better for leaving this, let me know. And believe me, yours very sincerely,

THOMAS SPEARS.

* One of the Shan states in N. Lat. 20° 25' Long. 97° 20' E. by Pemberton's map. A. P. P.

† Note. This is about 50 per cent. higher than Rangoon prices at present. A. P. P.

¹ Myet tsan woon, now transliterated Myit-sin-wun = 'Governor of the riverine tracts'. U Taw Sein Ko informed me that in Lord Dalhousie's day there were two of these officials in charge of the Irrawaddy, one for the division extending from Amarapura to Rangoon, the other for the division extending from Amarapura to Bhamo. The British dealings were with the former official.

² A double skirt-length of Burmese silk; the word is now usually transliterated 'paso'

126

Rangoon, June 22d, 1854.

My Lord,

I have received your Lordship's letter of the 5th of June.

Most of the new boats for the river have proceeded to their stations, and in about a month more, I think, every gun boat may be withdrawn.

Major Nuthall, as long as he was actively employed in Tharawaddy, had not such opportunity for completing his corps as he will have now. He is stationed at Myanong on the river bank in the midst of a large population. He certainly, wherever he has taken the corps—few though the number enrolled be as yet—has shown that the men behave well, when hard work is required. A dispatch of his, which goes by the present mail, is an additional proof of this.¹

I have not received the dispatch your Lordship alludes to regarding the new port near Negrais Island, but which I hope to receive by the next mail. After a lengthened stay of six weeks at Bassein I am thoroughly convinced that the place is in every respect (except one i.e. being central) unsuited to be the Head Quarter station of the district. I feel assured that the site near Negrais will be well adapted for a settlement, civil, military, and commercial. At first there may be difficulties regarding

labourers, but I feel confident the port must rise to be a place of importance. This will be independent of the opening of the branch of the Irrawaddy above Henzada, though no doubt that would aid the new port wonderfully. I will make the application regarding the new city being called after your Lordship, as soon as I receive the dispatch regarding Dr. Forsyth's report upon the site.

I feel in considerable anxiety, My Lord, regarding the electric telegraph—that I scarcely see the possibility of having all the material required by Dr. O'Shaughnessy at the time he appears to expect it—that is, by December next. But be assured, My Lord, I will make every exertion possible. I propose to make Major Du Vernet Superintendent of the work; and as it will be very hard work, and only a temporary appointment, I would propose to give him a staff salary of 800 Rs. a month.

In the changes of stations among the assistant commissioners I purpose, my Lord, to send Lieut. Spilsbury to Henzada, should your Lordship see no objection. But as he is a married man, he begs earnestly to know whether he may be allowed to take his wife there. Henzada is the Head Quarter station of a Regt. of the line, and I think this might be allowed without the slightest danger. May I give him hopes on the subject?

I am, My Lord,

with much respect your obedient servant,

A. P. PHAYRE.

¹ A dispatch reporting an expedition led by him against Gaung Gyi, and his destruction of a dacoit stronghold at Payagyi. (*I.S.P.*, Cons. 28 July 1854, No. 3.)

127

Private. Government House, July 5th, 1854.

My dear Phayre,

By Sesostris I received your several letters of June 11th, 11th, 21st, 22nd, with their enclosures from Mr. Spears. I received also the letter from Father Abbona, which I return to you with a translation.

The tone of these letters is very obviously conciliatory, after making all due allowance for humbug. It must be truly grati-

fyng to you to see the mutual relations between Pegu and Burmah on such an amicable footing, that the King of Ava can never so much as eat a mango without wishing that you were there to halve it with him!

I am glad to hear that the boats for the river police are nearly ready, and that you will soon have the line in operation. At the same time I do not wish to hurry you in the withdrawal of the European gunboats.

It is a pity the prisoners got away, and not easily intelligible, with European guard over them and irons.

To whom shall I pay here any charges you are good enough to disburse for me? Or shall I remit the money to yourself?

I think it very probable that Major Allan's letter was abrupt. It seems to me very desirable that you should prohibit all officers on the frontier either writing to or replying to Burmese officials except in indispensable cases; and that for such cases you should furnish them with a formula of terms of respect, etc., to which they should be required most closely to conform. At the same time it would be well that the King and the Lootdaw should be told that no officers are authorised to correspond except yourself, and that they should be requested to consider your letters alone as those for which the Government is responsible.

If the King will make a Treaty, I shall not object to sulphur and flints being imported; but powder and muskets and cannon they cannot expect us to let pass, except such as may be specially allowed to go under a permit from the Commissioner. We can thus regulate the quantity, or at all events know what it is.

I will have the presents to the King and Prince prepared for you. I shall make no objections to the King sending things to the Paris Exhibition, provided he sends them through this Government. He may be assured that the utmost care will be taken of them, and that they shall be kept separate as being sent by His Majesty.

Regarding the electric telegraph, all you can do is to do your best. But if as the season goes on, you see continued reason to doubt your being able to accomplish all that is proposed, then *make sure of one line*; and put all your force on the one from Rangoon to Meeaday.

Do as you like about posting the Assistants. With regard to

Lieut. Spilsbury taking his wife to Henzada, which you recommend as safe, I shall not object if you can officially pronounce it safe. But recollect every other woman must be admissible there, if one is. If, after duly weighing this, you still consider it safe, you can do it, giving public notification as to Henzada.

I now come to the question of the Envoy. In the draft letter¹ from the Woongyees, enclosed by Mr. Spears on 9th May, they talk of the object being the 'settlement of differences'. In the actual letter² sent on 18th May presents for the Governor General only are mentioned. It therefore seems doubtful whether they mean to negotiate about Mengdoon or not. You agree with Mr. Spears in thinking that they want to put off time, and to see how matters stand with us in respect of the war. This is very likely; but it must have a limit. I shall be happy to see the Envoy here, whether he makes a Treaty or not, because I believe his mission must do good. But if they have any desire to regain Mengdoon, they must do so by negotiation at once; for it will be inconvenient and impolite to keep the question of the frontiers open indefinitely. The Envoy shall be received according to my promise with all due distinction. I wish that some notice should be given. As soon as I hear from you that they are really coming, I will send Zenobia down for him. I should very much wish that you would yourself accompany him on his visit to Calcutta, and that you should bring Mr. Edwardes and one or two more good interpreters to take care of them while they are here. With respect to points of form, which it is as well to settle beforehand, he will be required, like all other native Sovereigns and gentlemen, to put off his shoes when he enters the apartment in which the G.G. is, provided he does so in the presence of his own Sovereign, which I believe to be the case. If he does not do so before his own Sovereign, he will not be required to do so here.

Adverting to the rumours mentioned in these letters as to our relations with other powers, I will send you an official letter by this mail which will put you in possession of the truth, and which you can use at Ava.

As soon as the mail came in, the Sesostris was ordered off, with provisions on board, in search of the unfortunate Lady Nugent. I fear the search will be vain but no chance should be

lost. The effect of this will be to delay the mail; as Berenice is under repair and Tenasserim must turn about and go back again.

Yours sincerely,
DALHOUSIE.

¹ *Supra*, No. 119.

² *Supra*, No. 124.

128

Rangoon, July 2d, 1854.

My Lord,

I have received your Lordship's letter of the 15th June. Regarding the new city I would respectfully beg to represent that I think it will be best to have merely a nominal rate for every description of building lot. There will undoubtedly be some difficulty in bringing settlers together, and it will scarcely pay merchants to give more than a nominal rate for land for any purposes. I have not received any dispatch in reply to my last on the subject, so that I have not written officially regarding the name of the city.

I am sorry to say that the Diana steamer does draw upwards of five feet of water.

I think that it will now be proper to bring down the Enterprize to Bassein. Nemesis will, I believe, have to go to Calcutta to have a thorough refitting, and to procure a fresh crew, as the engagements of the present men are up in August. The Proserpine will be a very useful vessel to retain at Rangoon. With the Police Flotilla now established I do not think any steamer is required up the river except the Mahanuddy. I will therefore, if your Lordship approves, order the Enterprize down here at once. The old hull of the Proserpine would be useful to moor off Kanoung and make the head quarters of the river police.

I beg to enclose copy of a letter from Mr. Spears dated the 16th ulto. I shall have everything prepared to receive the Burmese envoy in Rangoon in due state.

My last accounts from Captain Brown in Tharawaddy were up to the 30th June, when everything was quiet.

I am still very anxious about the electric telegraph—that is as to the time within which it is expected that the material for

it must be prepared. But every exertion shall be made to get everything ready, I am, My Lord,
with much respect your obedient servant,
A. P. PHAYRE.

129

Amarapura, 16th June, 1854.

My dear Captain Phayre,

I had only the pleasure of receiving your letter of the 16th May yesterday. The Woongyee's letter I delivered this morning; but this being the Coronation day he had only time to glance over it. At his request I am to call upon him in three or four days hence to have a talk over it.

You will see by my letter of the 1st inst.¹ what I have done in the Maendoung business. The draft treaty I have only shewn to Father Abbona, who was of opinion that it would be better not to let the King know anything about it at present; being of the same way of thinking myself I have acted accordingly. But the Woongyees have been informed that if they can come to a settlement with you, the Maendoung country will be restored.

The model pagodas are progressing, but they still want a long way of being finished. The King, the other day, when I was at the Palace speaking of the French Exhibition, asked me if I thought you would accept, as a present, a few putsoes of the best quality, if he were to send them to you, in order that you might place them amongst the other articles you were sending to the Exhibition. Although I have no authority for doing so, I thought it best to say that I thought you would take them, as any other answer would only have given him offence. Should you be willing to receive the putsoes, you can then send up the small present you intended for His Majesty and the Prince, and will not require to wait until the Pagoda is sent down. The Putsoes, ten in number, are packed in a small box, and will be forwarded on to you in three or four days.

Fresh dispatches from Kyantoung myo have been received, confirming what I told you in my last about the Siamees having been defeated. There cannot be a doubt now about it; the loss of the Siamees must have been very great both in men and material. The The-bo-maen-tha left this of the 6th for Monae

with about a thousand men; he is to remain there until the rains are over.

Mong Tso, the Myet tsen Woon, arrived here a few days ago to take his part at the Coronation, after which he returns to his old post at Pagan myow.

Three days ago an Englishman by the name of Queen arrived here from Prome. I have not seen him, but am told that he is a carpenter, probably a deserter. He is living inside the town in the same house with the man that came up some months ago.

No public business of any kind has been going on here for the last ten days, the people small and great being all employed in attending *poys** [pwes] or in making preparations for the forthcoming event. The King has promised to give me a good place today, so that I may be able to see all that is going on.

My last to you was of the 1st of the month, a much longer time than I would willingly allow to elapse without writing you a few lines. But the weather for the last ten days has been so very tempestuous that few or no merchant boats could venture to leave this, and consequently I had no opportunity of writing.

All prisoners are to be set free to-day in honor of the King's Coronation; it does not matter for what crime they may have been confined. There is no other news stirring up here at present, everything being as quiet as possible. I will write you again in a few days by a boat of my own, that is taking produce down. The customary dak boat will leave as usual on the 1st of the month, remaining at Prome until the 12th.

Father Abbona desires to be remembered to you; he has written twice lately in Italian. And believe me to be,

yours very sincerely,

THOMAS SPEARS.

* Festivals

¹ *Supra*, No. 125.

130

Private. Government House, July 11th, 1854.

My dear Phayre,

Tenasserim arrived on Sunday and brought me your letter of 2nd inst. with Mr. Spears' of 16th. The accounts from Thara-

waddy are improving, I am glad to see—and I make no doubt that you will continue to improve them as time advances.

I do not perceive any thing in Mr. Spears' letter relative to the mission of the Envoy; but you seem to be in positive expectation of him at Rangoon, altho' you do not say whether the expectation is founded only on the former letter, or whether you have heard more. The Tenasserim will arrive on 18th or 19th, so that you will be able to answer this by the next mail. By it pray let me know when he is to be expected, that I may send down either Zenobia or Sesostris to bring him up. At the same time let me know who [*sic*] he will bring with him, that sufficient accommodation may be provided.

It is desirable that the foolish reports, that seem to be taken to the King at Ava relative to the war, in which the British Government is engaged with Russia, should be dissipated by a plain statement of the actual position of affairs both in Europe and in the East.

I proceed to do so briefly, authorising you to make use of it in writing to Mr. Spears, as information commended to you by the Governor General. The King knows well that such an officer of the British Crown would neither write falsely nor boastfully.

The Emperor of Russia having made unjust demands upon the Sultan of Turkey and having marched an army against his dominions, England and France joined in alliance to protect the Sultan from injustice and violence. The four great Western powers, England, France, Austria and Prussia are bound together to prevent the Emperor marching his armies to the conquest of Turkey. England, France and Austria are bound together to compel the Emperor to withdraw his armies from the Turkish dominions *without delay*. For this purpose England, France and Austria have all added largely to their armies. England and France have already sent nearly 80,000 troops to Turkey, and will send as many more as may be required. Further England and France have prepared great fleets, one in the Baltic, one in the Black Sea, for the destruction of the Emperor's power at sea. The Baltic fleet comprises nearly 80 ships of war, of which nine carry more than 100 guns each, and which all together carry 3500 guns, all of the heaviest metal. Of these 80 ships

54 are moved by steam. In the Black Sea fleet are 40 ships of war, six of which carry more than 100 guns each, while all together carry more than 2000 heavy guns. Of these more than 20 are moved by steam.

The Emperor's fleets have not ventured to meet this force; but have remained shut up in their harbours while the English fleet have captured their merchant ships, and destroyed several of their forts and stores. In the meantime the Turkish army has held its ground against the Russian troops at the Danube, who have made no progress in advance.

It is not true that the Shah of Persia has taken part with the Emperor of Russia. On the contrary the Shah has declared formally and officially to the British Minister at Teheran his resolution not to take part with the Emperor, but to remain entirely neutral during the war.

In like manner it is false that the British Government in India is threatened with war by Russia aided by the Afghans. Russia is utterly without power to attempt to make war on India; and so far are the Afghans from desiring to aid the Russians, that I have lately received letters preliminary to a Treaty of alliance with Dost Mahomed Khan of Cabul. And I have already concluded a Treaty with the Khan of Khelat, whose dominions cover our frontier from Candahar to the sea. India never was more tranquil, more secure, or more powerful than now; so much so that I have offered, if her Majesty's ministers so desire it, to send some of the European troops in India to join the army in Turkey.

This plain statement of facts will shew how immense is the power of England and France united, and how false and absurd are the rumours of Russia or Persia or the Afghans attempting to make war on India.

I should be glad to encourage the King of Ava to send to the French Exhibition through us. The telegraphic mail of 9th June has come in. No news of moment. The Russians won't come out of port, and they have not taken Silistria or apparently advanced a yard.

Yours sincerely,
DALHOUSIE.

131

Rangoon, July 24th, 1854.

My Lord,

In return for the presents sent to me by his Majesty the King of Ava and which will be forwarded by the *Berenice*, I respectfully request I may be permitted to return as follows—

One of the 'singing bird' toys, which I hear will be acceptable.

A light double barrelled gun, with flint locks, to present to the heir apparent—Barrels 36 inches long.

A few bottles of the finest otto or [*sic*] roses.

Should a flint gun not be procurable, a gold watch, Mr. Spears states, would be appropriate.

The presents received by me from the King could not be properly packed in time to be sent by the *Tenasserim*. I am, My Lord,

with much respect your obedient servant,

A. P. PHAYRE.

132

Rangoon, July 25th.

My Lord,

The letters from Mr. Spears, which I have the honor to transmit, do not say the exact time when an envoy will leave Ava, but I presume it will be about this time next month. I have not been informed who will accompany him, but I believe about 25 to 30 persons might be expected. I shall have a residence prepared for them here, and they would not mind a little delay which might occur. But, My Lord, it is so difficult to count upon the movements of Burmese, that I could not venture to ask your Lordship to send a steamer by any fixed date. Still there probably would not be any great delay, if one were to be here by the 20th or 25th of August to wait for the envoy.

The steamer having returned here from Maulmain a day before she was expected, I have not been able to send up all I intended, but I have forwarded a dispatch containing what I have done to set the construction of a line of electric telegraph at work, which I hope will meet with your Lordship's approbation. I have also written regarding the new city at the mouth of the Bassein river. I feel very strongly, my Lord, that the lots

should have merely a nominal rate put upon them. The opening of the Irrawaddy river into the Bassein river will be a very important work with reference to the prosperity of the new port. I have not yet received any report on this subject from the Superintending engineer, but have written to him on the subject.

Your Lordship will observe that I have received some presents from the King. These I am not able to pack to send by this steamer, but will dispatch them by Berenice. The King asked for some of the fruit called Dorian. They are not to be had here, but I wrote to Sir A. Bogle and he sent me over 300 which arrived in the Tenasserim. These left in a fast boat for Ava immediately. I was obliged to send them off at once, and the steamer being in a day before her time, I had not ready for Mr. Spears, I regret to say, Your Lordship's statement regarding the present state of affairs in Europe. But it will go by steamer to Prome in two or three days and reach Ava not many days after the fast boat.

I will do as your Lordship directs regarding Officers on the frontier corresponding with Burmese Officers. And I will intimate to Mr. Spears that the King should be informed he may delay to negotiate relative to Mendoon until it is too late. I will come up with the envoy myself, bringing Mr. Edwardes and one or two others with me. The envoy will not object to take off his shoes at the entrance to Government House, and I will arrange that he understands he is expected to do so.

The Nemesis went down to the Andaman Islands, but from want of fuel could not go far; and Sesostris, which came in here for coal, and has now returned to search the Eastern coast of those islands, had seen nothing of the Lady Nugent on their Western coast.

I do not think, My Lord, there will be any risk at all in Mrs. Spilsbury going to Henzada. And as soon as the barracks at Namayan and Thayet Myo are ready, so that the soldiers' wives can be accommodated, I should recommend that they be allowed to go there also. I will then, My Lord, report by next steamer that I consider Henzada quite safe. I am, My Lord,

with much respect your obedient servant,

A. P. PHAYRE.

133

Amarapoora, 25th June, 1854.¹

Captain A. P. Phayre,

Commissioner of Pegu and Agent to the Governor General.
Sir,

When at the Palace today I received from the King a small tin box and was directed by His Majesty to have it forwarded on to you. It contains fifteen Putsoes, and one ruby ring, packed in a small gold box. His Majesty trusts that you will raise no objections to receiving this small present at his hands.

You are perhaps aware that the Burmese are particularly fond of the Durian fruit. His Majesty has requested me to say that he would feel very much obliged by your procuring some for him, and getting them sent up in a fast boat. If they are long on the road, they are sure to spoil.

The King has also directed me to inform you that presents are being prepared for the Most Noble the Governor General, and that as soon as the strength of the monsoon is over, an envoy will be sent round to Bengal with them.

I have, &ca.,

T. SPEARS.

¹ This and the following letter are arranged after Phayre's of 2nd August (No. 136) in the Dalhousie Collection, but were obviously sent to Lord Dalhousie enclosed with Phayre's of 25 July (No. 132). Hence their present position.

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Amarapoora, 25th June, 1854.

My dear Captain Phayre,

I had last the pleasure of writing you on the 16th inst., the day of the Coronation. It passed off very well, and business is now being carried on in the usual manner. All the prisoners were set free, the son of the Tsykya maen* and his followers amongst the rest.

Today I have written you an official letter with some presents from the King. I have thought it better to do it in that form, as I am not quite certain whether you may wish to receive them or not. The King will be very much pleased if you can get the Durians for him. In former days a small boat from Rangoon to

Amarapoora, loaded with this fruit, never took longer than 12 days, and sometimes even did it in less.

Yesterday your Dak boat returned from Prome. By it I had some private letters, but I was not favored with any from you. As it will leave on the first of every month, and will reach Prome on the 6th or 7th, you can always have an opportunity of writing. My letters from Calcutta are up to the 18th May and my agent writes me that up to that date no compensation had been made me by Government.¹ For various reasons I feel very sorry on this account. A *Burman* dak boat will leave this on about the 15th of every month. I will always write you by it, but should you have any very particular letters to send, you had better do so by some other boat. They will be safe enough, I dare say, but then you can never be sure.

It is reported that the Siamees have lost about seven thousand men by famine and the sword. The Shan part of the Burmeas forces made no prisoners, the few that were taken alive having fallen into the hands of the Burmeas troops that left this. Thirty elephants, ten guns, two mortars with a large quantity of gingals and muskets and about a hundred prisoners are expected to arrive here in a few days. No Europeans have been taken, but about fifty to sixty are reported amongst the slain.†

I had a letter from Mr. Moncrieff yesterday. He tells me that the people down about Meeaday had got hold of a report that the King of Burmah was going to invade Pegu with an army of 20,000 men! I can not comprehend where they get hold of such foolish stories; the King has no more idea of quarrelling with you at present, than he has of making a voyage to the moon.

I am not sure who will be sent to Calcutta, but it will be either your old friend the Maguay Woongyee or Mong Tso the Myeet-tseen-woon. The Woongyee is certainly to be preferred, but Mong Tso is not a bad man, and has always been anxious for peace. Trusting I may have the favor of hearing from you soon, I am,

yours very sincerely,

THOMAS SPEARS.

* Note. The Tsykya Maen (Meng) was the son of the King de-throned by Tharawaddee, consequently nephew to the latter and put to death by him. A. P. P.

† Note. Perhaps East Indian Portuguese, &ca. A. P. P.

¹ i.e. For war losses. At the end of the war the Government of India had appointed a Commissioner to investigate the numerous claims for compensation for damage to property inflicted by the Burmese, especially in the case of the Europeans evacuated from Rangoon by Commodore Lambert, when he broke off negotiations with the Burmese Governor. As no war indemnity had been exacted from the Court of Ava, but the province of Pegu had been seized in lieu of compensation, Lord Dalhousie, against the opinion of the Advocate-General, held that all reasonable claims must be met by the Government of India, but only those of 'veritable British subjects'. Armenians and Moguls were not to be included in this category, an exception, however, being made in favour of the American Missionaries, on account of 'their sacred calling and beneficent exertions'. Claims were admitted in respect of timber, merchandise, necessary clothing, and furniture, but not for houses destroyed. 'The Burmese Government', wrote Dalhousie in his minute on the subject (of 9 Dec. 1852, *I.S.P.*, Cons. 29 Dec. 1852, No. 26), 'never gave land to foreigners and rarely permitted a permanent building to be erected; any one who did so, did so at his own risk; by custom of country it was liable to be destroyed and taken from him at any moment. He had therefore no actual property in it.' Claims to the extent of Rs. 19,36,678 were submitted. These were whittled down to just over 2½ lakhs by the Commissioner, and a further Rs.70,860 was knocked off by the Government of India. Even then the Court of Directors complained that the settlement was too generous, though it sanctioned payment without further cuts. (*I.B.D.*, vol. lxxxvii, pp. 579-93, India Political Letter of 28 June 1854, para. 9.)

135

Private. Govt. House, August 3rd, 1854.

My dear Playre,

I have received your letters of 24th and 25th ult. The singing bird, the watch and the otto of roses go to you by this mail. Such a thing as a flint gun with a barrel 36 inches long was not to be got for love or money in Calcutta. The message from the King seems to leave no doubt that an envoy will really come from Ava. You can make him understand, before he leaves Rangoon, that as regards Mengdoon it is 'now or never'; that if they will treat on the terms I specified to you, the King shall have Mengdoon. If it is not done now, the British Government will not hereafter entertain the question.

If an Envoy comes, a house must be provided for him. Tell

me, so far as you can guess, how many of the 25 or 30 people, who will be with him, will require separate rooms, and how many will be servants to be lodged as such.

Regarding the shoes I don't require the Envoy to take off his shoes, *unless he does it at his own King's Court*. If he keeps them on there, he may keep them on here.

I may probably hear more precisely of his movements by your mail of this day. But I should hardly like to dispatch Zenobia with any chance of her being delayed: for she is the only man-of-war we have in the Bay; and altho' it is not probable that she will be needed, it is possible.

I am quite willing that you should do what you wish about the town lots at Negrais. Fraser rather threw cold water when he was here (I thought) on the scheme for joining the Irrawaddy and Bassein rivers; but I look upon the measure as of first importance, and must have it done. Tremenhere unfortunately is obliged to go home sick.

If the King is civil and makes terms with us, we may make arrangements for getting his Dorians for him regularly. The Court will need all the otto of roses you are sending to compensate for the stink of the Dorians that are preceding it.

Sesostris heard nothing of the Lady Nugent at the Nicobars. On the 9th ult. Lord Harris¹ wrote to Mr. D. Eliott who is here, that she was safe—nothing more—and strange to say not a word more has been said by the mail just come in; so that we are in a state of most painful suspense.

I am afraid that the intention of the Government regarding the Electric Telegraph has not been made sufficiently clear to you, and that you have thus been misled into appointing Major Du Vernet Superintendent of Electric Telegraph in Pegu. It was not intended that there should be any other person in that capacity than Mr. Wickham, or that so costly an auxiliary staff should be added. I do not think you can be aware that you have proposed for Major Du V. the salary of Superintending Engineer. I am therefore unable to confirm these appointments. Whatever expense may have actually been incurred will, of course, be paid: but the establishment must be suspended until we shall have been able to refer to Dr. O' S.² for I do not like his plan, and his crossing and recrossing the river is open to the strongest

objections. As I observe Major Du V. says that nothing can be done till after the rains, I hope this measure will not cause any delay. If it does, it is my own doing, and, of course, you will not be blamed. I think it is made clear from these papers that we must for next season limit ourselves to the line between Rangoon and Meeaday. The brevet, I am glad to say, has given you a step up the military ladder.³

Matters are going very favourably for us in respect of the war in Europe—tho' as yet the Turks have done it all for themselves.

Yours sincerely,

DALHOUSIE.

¹ Governor of Madras, 1854-9.

² O'Shaughnessy, Superintendent of Electric Telegraphs in India, *vide supra*, Letter No. 55, note 1.

³ A reference to Phayre's promotion to be major.

136

Rangoon, Aug. 2d, 1854.

My Lord,

By the *Berenice* I forward in charge of Lieutenant Berthon the silks and ruby ring received from the King of Ava.

From Mr. Spears' letters, which I have the honor to transmit, your Lordship will observe that the Burmese envoy is not to leave Ava until the end of August about. So that if a vessel shall be ready at Rangoon by the first few days of September, it will, no doubt, be in very good time.

I have had the *Enterprise* brought down to Rangoon, as she will require a few repairs, and it was advisable to bring her down while the river was full. *Nemesis* will, I believe, require rather extensive repair; and if your Lordship approves, I will relieve her with *Enterprise*. I sent a boat party to ascertain if the *Diana* could be taken into the Sitang river by the Creek leading from the Pegu river. The report is that it cannot be done. Would your Lordship wish that steamer to be sent into the Sitang by sea after the monsoon? I believe that can be done; but during the dry season she would not be able, I believe, to go higher than Shwe Gyeen. I know not if your Lordship has ever seen the report of Lieut. Campbell of Engineers as to cutting a canal from

the Pegu river to the Sitang. The report was sent to the Military Board by Colonel Fraser.

I have received orders regarding Lieut. Lloyd of the Madras Artillery,¹ that the Madras Government are unwilling to give his services. He is, however, such a very active useful Officer, that I trust I may be permitted to retain him, at all events for a time. May I, my Lord, make another application to that effect?

In collecting articles for the Paris exhibition we have got a fine pair of elephants tusks. They are about nine feet long and weigh 180 lb. the pair. Now the Paris exhibition would be able to get larger ones from Africa, and if your Lordship would like this pair I will reserve them.

I forgot, my Lord, to mention in my last, that if you would have the goodness to pay the amount of the silver casket &c. to Messrs. Cantor and Co. of Calcutta, I should be obliged.

Tharawaddee is quite quiet. One of Goung Gyee's chief men surprised me by coming in here to me—having got round to the eastward to Pegu city and so down to Rangoon. He came with his wife and family and several followers. It seems that he was afraid to deliver himself up in Tharawaddee, as the *Factions* are so furious against each other, that he feared being put to death before he could reach a British Officer. I have now sent him up to Captain Brown, to whom he will be very useful, and I have just heard that two more chiefs late in arms have gone into Brown's camp. So that friend Goung Gyee is evidently being deserted.

I have written regarding Henzada being opened. And as soon as the barracks are ready at Namayan and Thayet Myo, I think the soldiers' wives might even be allowed to go to those places.

We are having plenty of rain, and a great quantity of land is being sown. I am, My Lord,

with much respect your obedient servant,

A. P. PHAYRE.

Mr. Moncrieff² has written to me saying he wishes to resign his appointment. I am very sorry to lose him. I believe he has an advantageous offer from a house in Calcutta. I would propose to nominate for the appointment Mr. Low, the present Inspector

of Post Offices in Pegu, who is exceedingly well suited for the situation.

P.S. I lately sent up the Custom returns to the end of April. I now enclose a memo of duties collected at Rangoon in July.

¹ Presumably the officer of that name who had distinguished himself in charge of a battery of howitzers during the attack on the Shwe Dagon Pagoda in the recent war.

² Collector of Customs at Myede.

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My dear Captain Phayre, Amarapoora, 2d July, 1854.

On the 25th Ulto: I had the pleasure of writing you two letters, one official, by the orders of the King: I trust the presents that accompanied it will not be rejected. Should you be pleased to send up the Durians, I would not advise you to try to do so in any large quantity; a few hundreds would be quite sufficient, and if taken from the tree, before they are quite ripe, with a small piece of the branch attached, there would be little difficulty in landing them here in good order. I believe the best kinds of Durians are produced at Pulo gune¹ near Maulmain. A few are grown at Rangoon, but as the trees are on Pagoda ground, they will be of no use here; the King could not eat them.

A Burman date corresponding with the 4th August has been fixed on for the Envoy leaving this with presents for the Most Noble the Governor General. I believe the Woongyee will write you on this subject by the next Burman Dawk boat which will leave this on the 15th of the month. The King has determined to keep two boats going regularly to leave this on the 4th of the waxing and waning of the moon (Latsan and Labequa).² I will always write you by them, and give the boatman a note to call with at the Post Office for any private letters or papers there may be of mine lying there. These boats are to be under my charge, the packet to be delivered to me as soon as it arrives. I do not think there is much chance of their intercepting any letters, and unless those you happen to write me contain something very particular, I do not think there will be any danger in forwarding them through this channel. When you have anything very particular to write about, you could hire a small boat at Prome or let your letters

remain there until your own dawk boat arrives, which will always be on the 6th or 7th of every month.

Father Abbona has not been very well lately. Tomorrow he leaves for Nebeck Chardruayua and some other Christian villages situated down the river. The King has given him a war boat to take him there. Abbona expects the change of air will do him good, and purposes remaining for about a month.

Some 30,000 Viss lead left this for Rangoon last month, two-thirds of it being the property of the King. It is intended to use the proceeds of it in the purchase of a river steamer, if such a thing can be had in Calcutta.

The Lootdaw for some days past have been making arrangements for charging an export duty on all produce leaving the country. The duty to be the same as that charged formerly at Rangoon. No Collector has yet been appointed, and it is not settled where the Custom House will be built; but it will be, I think, from what I have heard, somewhere below Maloon, Maloon not being sufficiently sheltered for boats in the South West monsoon.

There is no particular news from the Shan country, that under the Burmeas rule being quiet. Every report we hear from that quarter confirming what we before heard of the total rout of the Siameas Army. The The bo Maentha remains at Monae. The King has written for Sarkees Manook to come up here with his family. Perhaps he wants to make him Interpreter again. He is the same Armenian that accompanied the Mission to Prome last year.

This boat costs you 40 Rupees, which I will charge to your account. And remain,

Yours very sincerely,

THOMAS SPEARS.

¹ The island of Bilu opposite Moulmein.

² *Vide* Letter No. 69, note 4.

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My dear Captain Phayre,

Amarapoorra, 7th July, 1854.

Many thanks for your letter of the 11th ulto.—it came to hand yesterday. The 'Home News' was very acceptable, and I feel

obliged to you for your kindness in sending it up. We received the same mail some fifteen days ago, but then that was mere chance, the boat having had a fine run from Rangoon, doing the distance in sixteen days. I will always feel particularly obliged by your sending up any late papers, as it is ten to one they will be 'new'.

I feel grateful and obliged to you for your official letter of the 12th June; it has relieved my mind greatly. My friends will not now have any cause to blame me for my stay here. Captain Ardagh does not say anything about the sample of English coal, so I suppose he is going to send it by another opportunity.

I cannot conceive how the 'Editor' of the paper, or any other person, could have fallen into the mistake of calling the Heir Apparent 'Mendat Meng', but I think I can explain how it has originated. The Thlung-Maen-tha [Thalun Mintha], half brother of the present King, killed in the storming of Amara-poor last year, was called ['Mindat Min' in Burmese characters] from having formerly had the town of Mendat given to him by his father as an appanage. The Heir Apparent is never called anything else than 'Ein She Men'* [in Burmese characters] pronounced in conversation [Ditto]. In petitions he is generally styled [Ditto].¹ He has got a title or 'boy' like all other Burmeas of any rank, but it does not sound the least like 'Mendat Meng'. It is in Palee, and I think I will be able to give it you in Burmeas, next time I write.

By the next arrival of lead from the Shan country I expect to get some ore, which I will have much pleasure in forwarding to you.

We have two Englishmen here at present; the first came up here some months ago, gives his name William Roach, or something very like that. He is a gun smith, and was ordered to make muskets on his arrival here; but not having the proper tools with him, he did not succeed, and has now been told that he can be of no use here. The other arrived about a month ago, and calls himself — Queen. He says he is a ship carpenter, and so to try him the King has given him a boat to build. I will give you his full name by and by. Neither of these men can do any harm here. They have both received presents from the King to the value of four or five hundred rupees.

Three letters have been received from D'Orgonie since he left this: one from Rangoon, the other from Calcutta, and the last dated from Egypt. The first two I have seen; and I think I mentioned to you in some of my previous letters that they contained nothing of any importance. The last, which was addressed to Mr. Camaretta, and came up here in Father Abbona's packet, was not shewed to me; it was received some twenty days ago, translated and given to the King. However, the meaning of it I think I can give you pretty correctly. He presses the King to send him certificates of his having been here. He also wished the King to enter into an agreement with some Europe merchants to supply timber to the extent of some three million franks [*sic*]. One million he offers to get paid to the King at once; the second million, when one-third of the timber is delivered in Rangoon, and the last instalment on the receipt of another third of the timber. The remaining one third to be delivered in the course of a year or two. He also presses the King to present him with a district a few miles square. If there is not a single man on it, it is of no consequence, he says, as he merely wishes to say, when he arrives in France, that he has landed property here. If the King should agree to this, he assures him that no one can stop his coming out to this country again. He also mentions in that letter that the Emperor of France is in strict alliance with the Queen of England, but that the Officers of the army do not at all approve of the arrangement, and that it will not be long before they quarrel again. I believe this was all the letter contained, and I do not think an answer will be sent from this at all. I have taken great pains to impress upon both the King and Prince that there is not the least likelihood of the French and English going to war, even if the Russian question was settled tomorrow.

I am anxious to see the report on the muster of coals I sent down; the Prince very frequently asks me if I have received no answer yet. The Prince is very fond of good otto of roses (rose oil); you might send him some of it. You could easily get it in Calcutta. I would not recommend your purchasing [it] in Rangoon.

I have yet to thank you for your kindness in sending me up the form of bill for drawing my salary. I now enclose you my

accounts made up to the 30th June. Perhaps these bills should have been sent up to my Rangoon agents direct; please let me know if I have done wrong in sending them to you. The only sums not yet charged for are advances on the model pagoda, and for some silk cloths. When these things are finished and sent away, the bill will accompany them.

I had the pleasure of writing you on the 25th ulto. and 2d inst., and have now got little more to add. The Woongyee told me yesterday that he is going to write you by a dawk boat of his own in four days hence, to let you know the time when the mission may be expected to leave this. It will be some time early in August.

Father Abbona is on a visit to the Christian villages down the river. Your letter to his address will be forwarded on by the first opportunity. Everything is quiet up here and progressing in the right direction. And I remain,

Yours sincerely,

THOMAS SPEARS.

* Note. Seeing in the *Friend of India* that the Heir Apparent was called by *Europeans* the 'Ein She Men' implying that this was not his real title—and as I had never heard Burmese use any other, I wrote to ask Mr. Spears the state of the case. A. P. P.

¹ Burmese characters were not inserted in the copy sent to Lord Dalhousie.

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Private. Govt. House, August 14th, 1854.

My dear Phayre,

I have received your letter of 2nd inst. I am sorry that our old friend¹ is not to be the Envoy. However, this man appears to be well spoken of. No mention is anywhere made of this mission having any object but that of bringing presents. Nothing is said of Mengdoon or a Treaty. In a former letter I observed to you that the question of Mengdoon could not be left open indefinitely. The continued silence induces me to authorise you to make a still more pointed communication to the Envoy, when he joins you.

I should wish you to ask him explicitly whether he has instructions and powers to negotiate the restoration of Mengdoon on the

condition of recognising our possession of the rest. If he says he has not, or if he refuses or evades to answer, I should wish you to tell him that you are instructed to state to him, that if the King wishes to obtain the restoration of Mengdoon, and to obtain the removal of the prohibition to the passage of sulphur etc. into Burma, His Majesty must enter into negotiation on those points *now*. They cannot be left indefinite. And if his Envoy does not come to an understanding with the British Government on this occasion, *those questions will not be entertained hereafter*. If it shall appear that the Envoy has no instructions on that head, he had better remain at Rangoon until he can communicate that message to the King and receive an answer. You can, if you please, inform Mr. Spears accordingly.

You can make the arrangements you propose about Enterprise and Nemesis. Under existing circumstances I would not send a steamer into the Sitang. We have been busy on Dr. Campbell's plans for a canal up here: but much more examination, it seems, will be required before any decision can be come to.

You may make a try for Lt. Lloyd, and I will do my best for you: but I can't ensure success.

If the Tusks are really 9 feet long I shall be very glad to have them and pay for them; *provided* they are not given by anybody expressly for the Exhibition. I will pay your past disbursements for me, with many thanks, to Messrs. Cantor.

The symptoms from Tharawaddy and the surrender of the Chiefs are very satisfactory. Rats desert a falling house in Pegu as well as in Parliament St.; and I therefore regard these 'comings in' as indication of Goung Gyee's approaching downfall. I shall be most happy to let the families go to Thayet Myo and Namayan as soon as possible; but I will not agree to it until there is a place of defence completed at each, in the manner pointed out; so as to give complete security to the women, etc., in the event of the troops being called out of the station.

I am sorry to lose Mr. Moncrieff, though glad that he is able to better himself. Mr. Low may succeed by all means. I will add a few lines after the mail comes in.

Yours sincerely,
DALHOUSIE.

¹ Presumably the Kyauknaw Mingyi is here referred to.

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Private. Govt. House, August 18th, 1854.

My dear Phayre,

The mail has come in, but it gives me little to add. On the Danube the war is going favourably. The Russians are in retreat—General Schilders and General Luders both reported dead of their wounds. In both Black Sea and Baltic the Russian fleets are cooped up and won't shew a bowsprit out of harbour. And they are completely turned out of Circassia. All is quiet and right here.

Yours sincerely,
DALHOUSIE.

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Private. Govt. House, August 22nd, 1854.

My dear Phayre,

The Rob Roy having been wrecked on the Andamans and great part of her crew being still there I have sent Zenobia to bring them off. She will then go on to Rangoon in order to bring up the Envoy, if he should come. Captain Rennie will pay every attention to him. In case you should be in doubt about his salute, I will mention that if he be a Plenipotentiary with full powers to sign a Treaty, his salute will be 15 guns. If a mere Envoy, he will get 13.

In case you should come up before I can write again, *anchor at Kedgerree*, and telegraph up how many people he has and how many of these are servants. I will telegraph down again what the arrangements are to be. Find out, if you can, how long he means to stay. We are all quiet everywhere.

Yours sincerely,
DALHOUSIE.

142

Rangoon, Aug. 20th, 1854.

My Lord,

I am much concerned to find that I have taken steps in the Electric Telegraph, which your Lordship does not approve of.

There is, however, one portion of my plan which I probably have not explained with sufficient distinctness, and which I now beg to do. I did not mean that Major Du Vernet, and those appointed under him, should be anything more than temporary executive officers for marking out the line of Electric Telegraph and putting the posts in the ground. As soon as that work was accomplished it was intended that their functions should cease. Now as it is, I believe, your Lordship's wish that the Telegraph should commence working as soon as possible, I do assure you, my Lord, I am convinced what I proposed is the plan best calculated to obtain that object. Major Du Vernet says that 'much cannot be done during the rains', but the very important object of making preliminary inquiries regarding posts, arranging for the purchase of them and for having workmen ready to commence work as soon as the rains moderate, as well as travelling along the proposed line, *can* be done now. And if it is not done now, *work* cannot be commenced as soon as the season admits. I could not hope to push on matters with the desired degree of speed, unless I had four officers (exclusive of the Supt.), and it was partly because their appointments were temporary, and partly from the hard work and exposure they would have to encounter, that I proposed the rates of staff salary I did. If with the explanation I have given of the duties I intended Major Du Vernet to be limited to, your Lordship can approve of the plan, the salaries may be reduced to what may be considered proper. Regarding the route proposed to be followed, your Lordship will recollect that I at first proposed the direct road through Tharawaddee to Prome. On consideration, however, and consultation with Major Du Vernet, I considered the route he proposed preferable for the following reasons:

1st. It will be some time before the projected road from Rangoon to Prome is marked out and *cleared*; and until then the electric telegraph could not be properly watched.

2d. By following a line near the river the wires can be watched and protected without difficulty.

3d. The river line carries the telegraph to Donebew and Henzada, stations which would not benefit by it, were the line carried through Tharawaddee.

Finally, my Lord, if Major Du Vernet is allowed to go on, I hope the posts will all be ready to receive the wires by March next. He would then hand all over to Mr. Wickham and set to work at the line to Toungoo. I trust your Lordship may see sufficient reason in what I have stated to allow the work to proceed. Crossing and recrossing the river is certainly open to objection, and not, I trust, such as to be fatal to the plan. There are difficulties either way, and I finally thought it best to sacrifice a good deal to speed. What I proposed, I thought best calculated to secure what Dr. O'Shaughnessy in his letter wanted, namely posts to hang his wires upon during next dry season. I fear I must have wearied your Lordship upon this topic. I only hope I have not said more than is becoming.

Under a separate cover I send several letters from Mr. Spears. The Envoy, I presume, will arrive here early in September. He is the 'Dalla Woon' of Commodore Lambert; I am rather pleased with this change, as I saw him at Prome, and liked what I did see. Your Lordship will notice what Mr. Spears says upon the scarcity of rice. But our exports of rice at Meeaday have long shown us how dependent they are on the lower country for that article. Regarding the King's question about a steamer I informed Mr. Spears there would be no objection. I trust I did right in this?

I have answered the letter regarding the alleged advancement of the boundary line at Toungoo that it is quite impossible, and that I have heard nothing of any proceeding which I can possibly attribute the report to have arisen from. At the same time I have written to Mr. O'Riley on the subject.¹

Of the people who accompany the Envoy to Bengal it is probable that six or eight will require separate rooms. The rest will be lodged as servants.

I have received the singing bird and the other presents. The only thing wanting was a chain to the watch. This I omitted to mention, but will endeavour to supply one here, as making the present more complete.

I will fully make the Envoy understand that your Lordship expects he will be prepared to enter into a Treaty, or at all events to give some distinct pledge regarding the terms proposed in the draft treaty transmitted to me. In Mr. Spears' letter of

the 6th inst. he evidently doubts whether the envoy will have the power to do so. I had requested him to hint that they might delay too long in the matter and so lose all chance of securing the King's domain.

I have received about 220 maunds of coal from above Ava and it has been found to be good for steam purposes. I shall endeavour to arrange for more being sent. I am, My Lord,
with much respect your obedient servant,

A. P. PHAYRE.

P.S. I have received from Major Allan his report on the frontier, but do not send it up because the map, which is to accompany it, has not yet arrived. A.P.P.

¹ The Burmese Government complained that the British boundary had been advanced fourteen miles in the Toungoo district. It turned out from O'Riley's reply that when placing frontier guards for the protection of villages within British territory he had taken possession of the village of Maiban on the east bank of the Sitang because the latitude of the boundary line fell there. The boundary pillar, however, had previously been erected on a line due west of a pagoda 260 yards south of the village; so there was substance in the Burmese complaint. Phayre ordered O'Riley to retreat to the original line. Dalhousie administered a severe rebuke to the rash young Assistant-Commissioner: 'The Governor-General in Council will hold Mr. O'Riley most severely responsible for any act which may lead on his part to that trouble between the Governments to which he alludes in . . . his letter.' Furthermore, he was cautioned to be more moderate, avoid all correspondence with Burman officers across the frontier, and on no account take any measure in relation to them without instructions from his superior. (*I.S.P.*, Cons. 29 Sept. 1854, Nos. 1, 5, 6.) *Vide infra*, Letter No. 144, para. 1.

143

Amarapoora, 13 July, 1854.

My dear Captain Phayre,

The Maquay Woongyee delivered to me this morning a Burman letter to your address with a request that it might be sent by his own dawk boat. I now enclose it to Captain Ardagh to be forwarded on to you by the first opportunity. You will see by this letter that the Burman month of Tathalane [Tawthalin]* has been fixed on for the Mission leaving this, without mentioning any particular day. The Woongyee says he will write you again when the day is fixed, and let you know the

time when you may expect them at Meeaday. Tathalane corresponds with the end of August and beginning of September.

I am afraid there is something going wrong about the delivery of grain at Prome. I have received no letters from Captain Dickens: but from the people that took it down letters have been received from time to time, complaining of the great delay they have experienced in the delivery of it. They also state that after the Commissariat had received 1200 Baskets they refused to take any more, giving as a reason that it was the rainy season; that the wheat was swelled, and that it would lose much in weight when the dry season set in. A copy of those letters I now enclose you. It is possible that the wheat may have been damaged on the passage down, and that the men only write in this way to screen themselves. But in the absence of any documents from Captain Dickens to shew this, I am placed here in a very awkward position. If the grain is damaged, Captain Dickens ought to hold a survey on it, condemn and reject that portion which cannot be passed as sound (no person can have any objections to this), and take delivery of the remainder without delay. I shall feel greatly obliged by your instituting an inquiry into this matter and letting me know the result. By this boat I will write Captains Ardagh and Dickens on the subject. More grain will leave this tomorrow.

The Myet-tsen Woon Moun Tso,¹ as I thought, is the man they are going to send to Bengal. Although he is not a Woongyee, still he is a man of rank, and has the confidence of both the King and Prince. He was amongst the first to join the King, when he raised the standard of rebellion against his brother of cruel memory. Mong Tso bears a good character here, and I think you will find him to be a gentlemanly man (for a Burman) with not too much to say for himself. I am not certain who will form his suite, but the Kula Woon and Amyouk Woon² are spoken of as giving [*sic*] with him, the former because he understands a little English, and the latter to get an insight into the art of ship building, etc. He also wishes to have a look at the Mint. I do not know whether you have ever seen any of the present King's coinage, so I will now enclose you a specimen by which you will see they have much room for improvement.³ Everything is quiet here.

The silk and silver articles I am getting made for you, will be in Prome in August with anything else I can get ready in time. The King's model Pagoda only wants polishing, but mine is a long way behind hand.

F. Abbona has not yet returned from his cruise. I do not think that I ever mentioned to you that the King is building some large boats at a place about two miles out of town; they are fifteen in number, from 30 to 40 cubits in length. I merely mention this to you now, as it is not unlikely you may hear in Rangoon that he is preparing a fleet for the purpose of invading your Province. The other day there was a report in the Bazar that you were coming up here with a large army. How it originated I am sure I don't know, but it came to the ears of the King, who asked me if I had heard anything from my correspondents below. I told him that it was all stuff, and not to believe anything of the kind, as I was certain you would give me warning if anything of the kind was in contemplation.

And I remain yours sincerely

THOMAS SPEARS.

P.S. In the beginning of this letter I say that the Maquay Woongyee had delivered me a letter to be forwarded on to you. But when I called upon him in the evening as requested by him, he told me that he would not send it by this boat, but wait until the next left, when he will be able, he says, to give you the day the Envoy will leave this. Assure Captain Phayre that it will be in the month Tathalane. This goes by the Woongyee's own dawk boat; a similar boat will leave this every fifteen days.

T. S.

13th July 1854

Amarapoora.

* Note. The month Tathalane commences on the 23rd of August.

A. P. P.

¹ *Vide* Letter No. 125, note 1.

² Kula Woon = minister in charge of foreigners resident in Ava. Amyouk Woon = master of ordnance.

³ Properly minted coins were not issued by the Court of Ava until the coining of the 'peacock rupee' in 1861. The specimen referred to here would be merely a small lump of 'flowered silver' with a considerable amount of alloy in it. *Vide* Hall, *Early English Intercourse with Burma*, pp. 204-5.

144

Amarapoorra, 18th July, 1854.

My dear Sir,

I was today sent for by the King who requested me to communicate as follows:

That he had received dispatches from his people stationed to the northward of Toungoo, stating that four men had arrived from that city, sent by the British authorities there to inform the Burmeas that it is the intention of the English to remove the boundary line (7 tains) fourteen miles to the northward of the first line laid down, giving as a reason for this change, that there was a mistake in the latitude when the line was first marked out.¹

His Majesty feels particularly grieved at this, and begs leave to remark, that if it is true, it does not at all agree with the friendly tenor of the extract of your Calcutta letter, translated and given in to him. That trifling annoyances of this kind can only tend to put off a final settlement of affairs, and widen the breach between the two countries.

The King also desires me to bring to your recollection that in a former letter you have promised that should there be any dispute about the boundary line, you would communicate with the *Lootdaw* direct, and not with the local officers stationed on the frontier. The King also remarks that as this boundary line was laid down by your own people, and you were left by him to do it in any way you thought proper, that it would be hardly good faith on your part to make any alterations now, particularly at Toungoo, where troops were withdrawn on an understanding that no further advance would be made in that quarter.

I trust you will have the goodness to answer this letter with the least possible delay, as the King is anxious to know the truth of the matter. Your answer will be translated and given to his Majesty, and I remain,

My dear Sir, yours sincerely,
(Sd.) THOMAS SPEARS.

¹ *Vide supra*, Letter No. 142, note 1.

145

Amarapoora, 18th July, 1854.

My dear Captain Phayre,

I have this day by the orders of the King written you about some contemplated enlargements of your boundaries, which he has heard you intend making to the northward of Toungoo. This, I hope, will prove a false alarm, and that your answer will put things to rights again.

Father Abbona arrived here two days ago much improved in his health. Your letter has been delivered to him.

A man giving himself out to be the Sycia maen¹ arrived here a prisoner some four or five days ago. He was caught at Tsalane by Mounq Shoay Mounq (formerly Governor of Kyangaen) and is now in gaol with all his followers, some fifty in number. It is said that he came from Arracan. Some of those people will certainly be put to death.

My last to you was of the 13th inst. by the Burman dawk boat, and I have little now to add at present. But trusting I may have the pleasure of hearing from you soon,

I remain, yours sincerely,

THOMAS SPEARS.

P.S. The letter I wrote yesterday by the King's orders, is a mere translation into English of what he told me to write, as I can possibly make it [*sic*]. For my own part I do not believe a word about the boundary being extended further northward, and have told the King there must be some mistake in the matter. Preparations for the Bengal Mission are still going forward.

THOMAS SPEARS.

19th July.

¹ *Vide supra*, Letter No. 134, para. 1.

146

Amarapoora, 28th July, 1854.

My dear Captain Phayre,

I had duly the pleasure of receiving your letters of the 26th and 27th ultimo. Many thanks for the 'Home News'; it is the latest paper this time that has arrived here.

As you take notice of the boats the King is building, I am glad I alluded to the subject in my letter of the 13th inst. Some of these boats are now finished, and are to be sent up the river for rice, the King having purchased a large quantity there, which he intends to dispose of, when it arrives, at prime cost, to keep the price of that article down. From the great deficiency of rice this year fears of a scarcity are entertained. We have not had a whole day's rain since the monsoon set in, or what you could call a decent shower.

I saw the King yesterday, and told him that you were going to accept of the presents which he sent, and that you had requested me to thank his Majesty for them. I also mentioned that you had written to Calcutta for some small things (without mentioning what they were) as a return present, which would very likely arrive here in about a month hence. I also mentioned your kind offer to build a house for the Envoy in any part of the town he may wish to reside in. The King was very well pleased at all this, and requested me to tell you that he bears the highest respect for your character, and that nothing would give him greater pleasure than to see you at his Court. That if at any time you thought of coming up here, you would have full liberty to wait upon him at the Palace at any hour in private. That after the Envoy returns from Calcutta he would much prefer your coming up here to that of another man, who may not understand a word of the language or the customs of the country.

The King put a question to me the other day, which I was sorry I could not answer, and that was whether after he had bought a steamer in Calcutta, there would be any objections made to its coming up the river, provided it had neither guns nor munitions of war on board. I told him that my private opinion was that it would be allowed to proceed up, but that I could not give him a decisive answer; that I did not *know*.

The muster of English coal that you mention having sent up some time ago, has never come to hand; and as Captain Ardagh does not mention having received it in any of his letters, I am afraid it has not even arrived at Prome.

By this boat (the Woongyee's dawk) I send you a muster of the Tagine copper ore; it does not look so well as some samples I have seen. When you have ascertained its quality, will you

kindly let me know what percentage of copper it may contain. The Prince would like much to see the report or analyze [*sic*] of a small portion of the ore by some scientific gentleman, who understands the matter.

The lead ore I have not been able to get yet, but expect to receive it in a few days.

I had a letter the other day from a friend at Prome, who speaks very highly of the quality of the wheat sent down, but says there has been some dispute about the way of measuring it. The Commissariat people wishing to shake and press it down in the measure before striking it off. The other party insisting that the measure should be only filled and then struck off without either being pressed down or shaken. I do not know what may [be] the custom in some parts of India. But I know well that in England grain when measured is never either shaken or pressed down. The custom in this country I also think you will find coincides with the English way of measuring.

The names of the two English men here are William Rhoads and William Quinn. I have only seen them once since they came. We have heard that another Englishman has arrived at Pagan, and may be expected here in a few days. He gives himself out to be mate of a steamer, who has bolted from the companies [*sic*] service because they would not give him his pay (100 Rs. a month). His name I have not been able to learn yet.

I am a very bad hand at describing anything, and am afraid I would make a mess of the Coronation, if I was to try to describe it. I must get Abbona to lend me a hand.

Everything is quiet here. In a few days more I will have another opportunity of writing, and remain,

Yours sincerely,

(Sd.) THOMAS SPEARS.

147

Amarapoora, 6th Augt., 1854.

My dear Captain Phayre,

I had the pleasure of receiving your two letters of the 24th ulto. by the durian boat, which arrived here on the 3d inst. at 4 P.M. doing the distance from Rangoon in a little less than ten

days. I took the durians at once to the Palace and presented them in your name to the King, who expressed himself very much pleased at your attention in sending them up. Notwithstanding the very short time the boat has taken to reach this, I am sorry to say that hardly one of them was in good order; by the appearance they presented on being opened I think they could not have been sufficiently ripe when taken from the tree. The King remarked 'that it was certainly a great pity that they should have got spoiled after so much care had been taken to get them up in good order, but that it could not be helped, and that he felt equally obliged to you for your kind attention'. His Majesty then desired me to call all the boatmen next morning, as he wished to make them a present. This I did, and they each received a silk Potsow and a book muslin Goung-boung, twenty five men in all. The boatmen were not admitted to see the King, but had their presents given them at the Beadike¹ by the Atweenwoons. By the King's order I took the head boatman into the Palace gardens and showed him the marble pagoda his Majesty is getting ready for you; this was done in order that he might report progress when he returned to Rangoon. I have now got to thank you for Dr. MacClelland's report on the muster of coal sent from this; it will be translated and given in to the Prince. The muster of English coal, which you mention as having sent, has not yet come to hand.

The Myet-tseen Woon Mong Tso has been made Governor of Old Ava and Tsagine; his command extends down the river as far as Maloone. It is not intended now that he should go to Bengal. The man they have fixed on at present is Mongbathee, formerly Dalla Woon, and now holding the office of *Nanmada Woon*.² You will know something of the man; he is the same that used to go off so often to see Commodore Lambert, when he first arrived in Rangoon. The King has ordered the Woon-gyee to write you on the 5th of the Labequa,³ that is, some seven days hence, to let you know when the Envoy will leave this, and the time he may be probably expected to arrive at Meeaday. This you may depend upon. Mongbathee ranks after the Atweenwoons and Woongyees, but he may still be considered a man of high rank.

Not a single prisoner, gun, or musket has arrived from the

Shan country yet. This I think rather curious, and I begin to doubt much whether they have been so very successful as they wish people to believe. It is said that the reason of the delay is owing to the badness of the roads at this season of the year in that quarter.

We have got at times some very ridiculous reports in the bazar. One was that you had seized all the lead that had been sent from this, and was [*sic*] making preparations for coming up in a hostile manner. That consequently the King had sent orders to put old Ava in a state of defence, etc., etc. I don't know how the lead story was set going, but that regarding Ava is perhaps more easily explained. All those people, who before the war held office in Pegu, are generally speaking very badly off[f] now, and have frequently petitioned the King to be allowed to go down below to try what they could do for themselves. This liberty the King tells me [he] has always refused to give, but being apprehensive that some of them might slip away quietly with the purpose of causing disturbances in Pegu, he has caused them all to remove to Ava, where he has given them houses, and where they will be more under his eye. In all there are about a hundred ex-Governors, Paenans,⁴ etc., etc., who with their followers make up a good round number. Mong Myet Toon [Mya Tun] is one of them. He receives from the King a monthly stipend of 150 Ticals, and all the others from 20 to 100 baskets of paddy, according to the number of followers they may have.

People belonging to the Custom House here left for Maloon five days ago. They are to be stationed there for the purpose of collecting the duties upon exports, and upon all the imports of goods that are sold upon the road between Maloon and Ava. Goods that do not require to be opened out until they arrive here, will receive a pass at Maloon, and be allowed to pay the duty here as formerly. The export duties are to be on the same scale as those formerly charged in Rangoon. Many thanks for the 'Home News' and 'Friend of India' you were so kind as [to] send me; some parts I will get translated for the King. Did you take notice of a paragraph in the 'Home News' amongst the Parliamentary intelligence—where Sir C. Wood—in answer to a question put by Mr. Otway 'whether the Burmeas war was

ended now?'—replies by quoting a private letter 'he had received that day from the Governor General of India': that the King of Ava was so entirely satisfied with preserving his independence (a laugh) that not only had he withdrawn all his troops from the frontier, but he had entered into an arrangement to supply our troops with all the wheat grown in his country (Hear, hear). This part I will take care the King does not see.

I was just going to send away your monthly dawk boat when the dories arrived, and as there will be no use for two boats leaving at the same time, it will be retained here for next month. But as the people have been disappointed, I have given them 10 Rupees, which I will charge to your account.

Father Abbona writes you by this boat. He tells me he is going to give you his opinion of what may be the result of the Envoy's going to Bengal. He does not think he will have full power to make a treaty: that is, upon the terms the Governor General is likely to demand. In this I believe he is right. But perhaps I will be better able to form an opinion when I next write you.

Some of the Ava coals taken down by an Armenian named Markar on account of the Prince, I have just heard, had been sold at Prome for the use of the steamers there. In a few days more I will have another opportunity of writing and I remain,

yours truly,

(Sd.) THOMAS SPEARS.

P.S. The head man of your dorian boat had 70 pieces of Bengal Choppa silk hkfs. with him, on which Mr. Camaretta has charged no duty by the King's orders. This is but a small affair, but it is right you should know everything. T. S.

Mong Bathee called Mong Yaiyeen and Mong Poh to his house last night, and, I believe, questioned them a good deal about how matters were going on down below. T. S.

Excuse my putting a few [illegible A.P.] and private letters in your packet.

¹ Byedaik. *Vide* Appendix I.

² Nanmadaw Wun. *Vide* Letter No. 7, note 2.

³ Waning of the moon. *Vide* Letter no. 69, note 4.

⁴ Steersmen of the royal barges, who were given small districts to govern.

148

Amarapoora, 7 August, 1854.

My dear Captain Phayre,

I have just time (having been in town all morning) to acknowledge the receipt of your letters of the 14th ulto. They came to hand late last night. Some of the articles you require me to get for the Paris exhibition are not to be had in the Bazaar or I should have had much pleasure in procuring them for you.

The gold umbrella and complete set of Burman weights can be easily had. A ruby, sapphire, and a specimen of amber I may also be able to get, as also a Kama wa tsa.¹ But the 'Burman war chief's full dress and horse trapping', a Woongyee's dress and shields of various kinds are not to be had in the Bazaar, and if made to order, could not be in time for the Exhibition.

The King wishes very much to send you those things I cannot procure by purchase in the Bazaar, and asked me if I thought you would accept of them if they were sent. I told his Majesty that I did not know, but that the best plan would be for me to write and ask you. So kindly let me know by the earliest opportunity if you are willing to accept of those things from the King, and they will be at once sent down. In a day or two I will again write by Captain Ardagh's boat,

And remain, Yours sincerely,
THOS. SPEARS.

¹ Kama wa tsa, now transliterated Gamma-wa-sa. Mr. J. S. Furnivall tells me it is the ordination service of the Buddhist monks, and is read aloud at various ceremonies such as ordination, the dedication of a thein (*sima*), or to drive out an epidemic. The service is written in the old square characters in black, or sometimes in gold, on copper plates, or lacquered bamboo or cloth, and elaborately bound. The copy for the Exhibition would be one of these specially bound ones.

149

Private. Govt. House, Sept. 1st, 1854.

My dear Phayre,

I have to thank you for your letter of 20th August and enclosures. I yield to your representations about the Electric Telegraph, and send you sanction for all you proposed, except

an increase of Major Du Vernet's salary. His being retained at all was an indulgence to that officer, and still more his retaining his present salary. We cannot with propriety increase it.

Mr. Wickham will be down by the end of this month. Dr. O'Shaughnessy's letter will put you in possession of his views on your line.

The Envoy shall be honourably received; not the less so that he is our old acquaintance, the Dalla Woon. What you say about his having no powers to negotiate, and Mr. Spears' remarks to the same effect, are not so good. However, my mind is made up. They shall have no Mengdoon—no powder—and no sulphur—until they give a Treaty—and if it is not given before Christmas next, the door shall be closed finally, and locked. I shall make no objection to his getting up a steamer. But if he wants one, he must bring more than the 30,000 ticals he spoke of. Quarters will be prepared for eight persons in separate rooms, besides the Envoy.

Edmondstone¹ will send you a chain for the Prince's watch by this mail. I need not exhort you to encourage the importation of coal by all means. General Steel is staying with me here, repairing his delapidated establishment. He has been very unfortunate—tho' it is a small matter compared with the fate of the ship itself and her unfortunate passengers.

Nothing whatever has occurred during the fortnight in the progress of the war which is worthy of any notice.

Believe me to be, Yours sincerely,
DALHOUSIE.

¹ Foreign Secretary to the Governor-General.

150

Rangoon, Aug. 31st, 1854.

My Lord,

Your Lordship will see from my public dispatches that I have been obliged to take the disagreeable step of returning to the Woongyee his letter to me announcing the departure of the Envoy. The arrogant style in which your Lordship's anticipated return presents, were spoken of as the offering to a superior, it was impossible to put up with for a moment.¹ Had I not done

this some further insolence would have been committed. I trust your Lordship will approve of what I have done.

I am very much concerned that I have done in the matter of the electric telegraph what your Lordship cannot approve of. So far, however, I believe I have collected information which will be very useful to Mr. Wickham.

I have received your Lordship's letters of the 14th and 18th inst. I had previously written to Mr. Spears requesting him to urge the necessity of the envoy coming to a distinct settlement regarding Mendoon. On his arrival here I will take care that he fully understands the negociation must be concluded now. I intend receiving the envoy in the same manner that I had before arranged for; but I consider now he should not be allowed to embark for Bengal until the letter I have returned to the Woongyee has been replaced by one written in a proper style. Under these circumstances therefore his departure may be delayed until the latter end of September.

The elephants' tusks I before mentioned are 9 feet 6 inches along the outer curve. One weighs 90 lb. and the other 94 lb. They have not been purchased by anyone expressly for the exhibition and I will bring them up to Calcutta. The price I am not quite certain about, and cannot at present ascertain.

I enclose two letters from Mr. Spears dated the 9th and 13th of August 1854. The first relates chiefly to articles I had written to him to procure for the Paris exhibition. The open fretwork boxes, which he says he would not be able to have made in time, I have since written to him to have prepared, as they will probably be good specimens of Burmese workmanship, which your Lordship may wish to have.

I also enclose two letters from Father Abbona, which I have not been able to have translated here. The part in the letter of the 13th August, which is in Burmese, I have translated, and can only guess that the King offers in return for Mendoon his best wishes and interest to preserve his friendship towards us.

Since I last wrote, there have been a few movements of the remains of the unquiet spirits in the interior part of Tharawaddee, but nothing of any particular consequence. There has, however, been an attack from beyond the frontier on a village eastward of Meeaday in which a large number of cattle have

been carried off. There appears to be strong reason for believing that this attack was made by people acting under Mounng Bo, the Myotwoongyee² of Meeaday under the Burmese Government, who still hovers on the frontier. I purpose addressing a letter of remonstrance on the subject to the Woongyee. I am, My Lord,

with much respect your obedient servant,

A. P. PHAYRE.

¹ The reference is to a letter from the Kyaukmaw Wungyi announcing the dispatch of an Envoy with presents from the King of Ava to the Governor-General of India. 'The style in which mention is made in this letter of anticipated return presents to be made by the Most Noble the Governor-General of India to His Majesty the King of Ava is very offensive,' wrote Phayre officially. 'The term used is that which in the Burmese language denotes the act of offering a gift by an inferior to a superior. It is artfully introduced as if the words of one of my letters to Mr. Spears were being repeated. I need hardly say that my letter to Mr. Spears, in which I mentioned that return presents would be made, was written in the English language.' (*I.S.P.*, Cons. 26 Jan. 1855, No. 1.) Dalhousie replied officially that he entirely approved of Phayre's action. The letter, he pointed out, was worded so as to make it appear as if the proposal for the dispatch of presents to Bengal originated with the Commissioner, and that the overture was made by a formal letter to Spears. On the contrary the reverse was the case. The proposal to send presents was made by the King in a private message to the Commissioner through Spears. The Commissioner, after referring the matter to the Governor-General, had replied in the same private form through Spears. The King and his ministers knew perfectly well that Spears bore no official character, and hence could make no communications of a formal or official nature. Phayre was therefore instructed to write officially to the Wungyi explaining that: 'The Governor General of India in Council, as the representative of the Sovereign of England, acknowledges no superior among the Kings and Rulers by whom he is surrounded. He holds intercourse with none unless upon terms of entire equality, and he will receive no communication from any, which, by addressing him as though he were inferior in dignity, exhibits disrespect towards the Sovereign he represents.' For this reason the Envoy and presents could not be received in Calcutta until a letter couched in unimpeachable terms was received in substitution for the one complained of. Furthermore Phayre was to 'explain in the most explicit manner' that Spears was not an officer of the British Government, and that nothing said or written by him had any official character whatever. (*Ibid.*, No. 2).

² He seems to have been muddled between Myowun and Myothugyi. The attack was made upon the village of Lay dee (Ledi). Phayre wrote

an account of it to the Kyaukmaw Mingyi giving him the names of persons concerned and list of property stolen. He asked him to punish the offenders and check such crimes in future. (*I.S.P.*, Cons. 27 Oct. 1854, No. 1.)

151

Amarapoorā, 9th August, 1854.

My dear Captain Phayre,

I had last the pleasure of writing you on the 6th and 7th by the return durian boat. Your letter of the 14th ultimo I was at that time only able to answer in a very hurried manner.

You will perhaps think it curious that the Woongyee dress, 'a Burman war chief's full dress and horse trappings' and shields of various kinds are not to be had in the Bazaar. These things are always made to order, and I could not get the merchants to supply me without the King's permission to do so. On application his Majesty did not grant them leave, but offered to send all that was wanted down to you as a present. I explained to him that they were not for you personally but for the Paris exhibition, and that I did not think that you would accept of them on those terms. But I told the King that if he wished to send them to the great Paris exhibition as a contribution from himself, I had little doubt but that you would be most happy to take charge of them. Even this did not satisfy him so I was obliged to say that I would write and ask you whether you would accept of them or not. The value may be from two to three thousand Rupees. Should you not wish this unsought-for gift, it will be very easy for you to say that not being for yourself, but a commission from another, you could not think of depriving his Majesty of such valuable articles without paying for them.

Since writing you on the 28th ulto. I have added a few more things to the list I then gave you in, as being prepared for the Exhibition:

- (2) Two marble images of Gattama reclining, 3 feet long.
- (1) Silver Betel nut box, 1 Viss in weight, 'Carved' and fitted up with small carved silver boxes used for lime, betelnut, &ca.
- (1) One set of small silver ornamental boxes for a lacker ware betelnut box.
- (1) Carved silver segar [*sic*] box.

The silver work will not be finished before the end of the month.

The open fretwork boxes required would take at least six months to get ready, so I will not order them until I hear from you again. The silver cup and stand, I think, will be done in time; the people are now working upon it. A Burman picture of the life of Guadama [*sic*] is rather a formidable undertaking. I have made particular inquiries about it, and have been told that it consists of 550 pieces or compartments ['Zats',] and could not be finished in anything like a reasonable time. The King has been working at one for more than a year now, and it is not finished yet. I have engaged a painter to execute a Burman War Chief in full dress, and a Woongyee in the same.

Yesterday I was shewn a list of the things intended for his Lordship; a great many of them would be just the thing for the Exhibition. The Woongyee writes you on the 13th *for certain*, and you will then be able to judge whether they will be in time or not. As I again write you on the 13th, I will say no more at present.

But remain, Yours sincerely,
THOMAS SPEARS.

152

Amarapoorra, 13th August, 1854.

My dear Captain Phayre,

By the Burman dawk boat now leaving I have the pleasure of forwarding you the Woongyee's letter. By it you will see that Tau tha lane, the next Burman month, is fixed upon for the Envoy leaving this. By the next boat on the 5th of the Latsan¹ [28th August] the Woongyee has again to write you, giving the day when they will leave this, and the time they are likely to arrive at Meeaday. Mong Bathee, as I told you before, is the man they are going to send; but it is not at all unlikely that they may change again.

I saw the King yesterday. He was speaking about the large tracts of ground he had brought under rice cultivation since he came into power, and says that in the course of another year he hopes that it will form an article of export. On this head one may be allowed to be a little incredulous; but they are still

continuing to build up the old reservoirs, and evidently think that in time they will be independent of Pegu for this article.

A mine of Hastal [sulphate of arsenic] is reported to have been found in the Shan country; of this I have seen no specimens, but some bullocks loaded with it are expected in soon.

It is impossible as yet to form an opinion as to what power the King may entrust the Envoy with, but the general impression is that these things will be amicably arranged: if not when he goes to Bengal, at least when the English envoy comes up here with the return presents.

Father Abbona is not very well, and is thinking of going to Rangoon, *after* the envoy leaves this, to try what the doctors and change of air may do for him. He writes you by this boat. I get my newspapers pretty regularly. Mr. Barlas sends them up to the Prome Post Office 'to remain until called for' as recommended by you. But should you receive any *late* papers, like those you were so kind as to send by the Dorian boat, I will always feel greatly obliged by your letting me have a copy.

The country up here is kept very [*?quiet*], but still we have got some robberies now and then. The last boat that Captain Ardagh sent up was stoped [*sic*] a little way below Myet-tsoung, and the men relieved of their potsoes and goungbongs. The small quantity of rice, two baskets, their provisions for the voyage was also taken; the whole they valued at eight Ticals. For this they have been paid sixteen by the orders of the King.

As I have been writing you so often lately, I have got nothing more to add at present,

But remain, yours very sincerely,
THOMAS SPEARS.

¹ Waxing of the moon.

153

Sept. 5th.

My Lord,

I have sent by Captain Rennie the elephant tusks I spoke of before. I trust they will be considered worthy of your Lordship's acceptance, and that I may be permitted to present them

as a specimen of the ivory of Pegu. I think they are as fine a pair as could be produced in the Province. I am, My Lord,
with much respect your obedient servant
A. P. PHAYRE.

154

Rangoon, Sept. 5th, 1854.

My Lord,

Yesterday I had the honor to receive your Lordship's letter of the 22d ulto. by Zenobia. My letters of the 1st inst. will have informed you of the letter, which I had received from the Woongyee, and which I considered it right to return. Since then I have heard nothing from above. It would not, I think, be proper for the Envoy to embark, until that letter had been explained. As then this will probably occupy some time, I have thought it best to send back the Zenobia. It is probable that the Envoy will send word to me of his arrival from Melloon or some place above Meeaday and wait for a reply; so that I do not expect him here before the 15th at the very soonest. And when he arrives, then I shall not be sorry for the Zenobia to be out of the way. In the mean time and until I receive a reply from the Woongyee, or orders from your Lordship regarding what I am to do in the matter of the letter returned, I shall treat the Envoy with all possible consideration, but tell him I expect an explanation regarding the said letter, and another one written in a proper style. I will be careful to give him the proper number of guns according to the rank of his mission. I will also telegraph from Kidgree the number of people, should I not be able to inform your Lordship beforehand.

If your Lordship thinks proper to dispatch the Zenobia so as to arrive here by the 20th or 21st, I think that would suit—or if kept a few days later she might bring the mail. My letter for the Woongyee left this on the 26th ulto. and I ought to receive a reply by the 25th inst.

Everything continues quiet and the river is quite safe for ordinary boats. The season also promises a fine rice crop. I am,
My Lord,

with much respect your obedient servant,

A. P. PHAYRE.

155

Private. Govt. House, Sept. 12th, 1854.

My dear Phayre,

By the Sesostris I received your letter of August 31st and by Zenobia two of Sept. 5th. Your conduct regarding the Woongyee's letter has been entirely and cordially approved by us all. Unless ample reparation shall be made, the Envoy shall not come here. The public dispatch is quite explicit. Nevertheless I think it right to add for your information that, much as we all desire to see a Burman Mission here, that object must not be sought at the sacrifice of a tittle of real dignity. So you will understand that we must have *real* reparation by the substitution of a proper letter, and by the doing this in a proper form. No reparation, no Envoy. They are a stupid and provoking set of beasts. No wonder they themselves believe they were beasts before their present state, and will be beasts after it.

I send you translations of Father Abbona's letters. The father is a humbug; and I now attach no credit to his letters, and no value to his influence. The Burmans want Mengdoon, and sulphur. They shall have both on the terms I have already stated, or equivalent terms. They shall have neither, except on those terms. All who are concerned may be sure that this answer is final and unalterable.

I shall be very glad to have the worked baskets to which you allude. The tusks have come. They are splendid fellows indeed. I could only hope when I saw them that Pegu would one day produce revenue on the same scale as tusks. And if all parts of it would only do as well as Myeeaday, my hope would be fulfilled. Your very kind wish to present these specimens to me gives me, I assure you, great pleasure. I feel some hesitation in accepting what, I fear, must be a more costly offering than perhaps I ought to let you make. But lest I should affront you by putting it on that ground, I will accept them with pleasure; and I shall be glad to preserve them at home as a memorial of our joint connexion with Pegu.

I shall be glad if it should turn out—as I am disposed to think it will—that the Woongyees are only 'trying it on' with us,

and if the Mission should come up after all. I shall be glad of it for several reasons; and for this among others, that it will give me an opportunity of talking with you on several points, on which it would be an advantage to me to do so.

I think the Province has already almost lived down the croakings of the Press and the Public.

We are quiet everywhere in India.

Sincerely yours,

DALHOUSIE.

156

Rangoon, Sept. 22d, 1854.

My Lord,

Under a separate cover I beg to enclose copies of three letters, dated 26th Aug. and 3d and 11th September. The latter refers to a conspiracy discovered at Amarapoora. I also add in original two letters received from Father Abbona. I have had rough translations made of these here, so I will not ask your Lordship to send me others. The worthy Father's sore point appears to be that the American missionaries should have received compensation for their losses, and he nothing.¹

I have full confidence, my Lord, that the Electric Telegraph will be speedily completed. Every exertion shall be made, and I am most grateful to your Lordship for the establishment.

I have not yet been able to make arrangement for coal from Ava. The Armenian, who has the monopoly, wishes to see the state of prices for English coal in Calcutta, and is holding back.

I received a chain for the Prince's watch, but having sent off the watch before its arrival I have retained it for the present.

It is possible that from my having been obliged to return the impertinently written letter of the Woongyee, some delay may occur in the arrival of the Envoy at Rangoon. I trust your Lordship will approve of what I did.

The Province remains quite quiet, except some raids on the frontier regarding which I also have had to address the Woongyee. I am, My Lord,

with much respect your obedient servant,

A. P. PHAYRE.

¹ *Vide* Letter No. 134, note 1.

157

Amarapoorra, 26 August, 1854.

My dear Captain Phayre,

On the 17 instant I had the pleasure of receiving your letter of the 27 ultimo, giving cover to the extract of a letter you had received from the Most Noble the Governor General, representing the present political state of affairs in Europe and Asia. According to your request I had it translated and given to the King, who read it over with attention, and then returned it to me, remarking that he had not the least doubt but that it was all perfectly true. That part of the letter, which treats of affairs in Europe, was not new to him, everything contained in the newspapers relative to the war having been translated by Father Abbona and taken to the Palace. The same may be said with regard to affairs in Asia, with the exception of that part of the letter which relates to the Khan of Khelat: that was certainly new to the King, and I am greatly mistaken if it was not the first time that His Majesty ever heard of that Prince or his dominions. You cannot conceive how utterly ignorant the Burmen of all ranks are, of the geographical position of the different states in Europe and Asia. For instance, it is only since the commencement of the war, they know that there are such countries in Europe as Austria and Prussia. That Russia was a great kingdom they knew long ago, from the representations made by some of the Armenians and Moguls, coming from that country and Persia. Of the relative state of the strength of the different states in Europe, they have got but a very confused idea. There are other people who translate the papers besides myself and Father Abbona, and who put particular stress on anything they think may tell against the British, magnifying as much as possible any small success the Russians may have, altering, or passing over entirely, those places where the French and English are victorious. Although the translations of those people are still sent to the King and Prince, I am happy to say that they do not now place the same confidence in them, as they were apparently inclined to do some months ago. In one respect the letter of the Governor General will do good, for the most part it confirms what we have told the King before, and coming

from a person in the exalted position of his Lordship, will leave His Majesty in future no room to doubt any statements we may make him.

By this boat I forward you the Woongyee's letter, giving the day when the envoy will leave this—Tautha lane Labequa 14 (corresponding with the 20th of September). Mongbathee, the *Nan-ma-da-Woon* is the man. He is to be furnished with a complimentary letter for the Governor General. In it I do not think that any mention will be made about a treaty. However, the envoy will, I believe, have instructions from the King to declare, as publicly as the Governor General may think proper, that his master will at all times respect the boundary laid down by the British. The King has also told me in private, that when the British envoy comes up here, he will receive the same declaration from himself in person in open court. Should this prove satisfactory, the matter may be looked upon as settled. For my own part I do not think the King will enter into any formal treaty at all, even if more territory was returned to him than Mendoon.

Father Abbona and myself have done our best to impress upon the King the great advantages he would derive from having a clear understanding with our Government, pointing out the probable loss of Mendoon from delay, and the unlikelihood of your allowing the importation of munitions of war, without a formal treaty. But he prefers risking all this to doing the thing at once. Besides the letter for the Governor General, Mongbathee will be furnished with private written instructions from the King himself. In my next, which will be in the beginning of the month, I think I will be able to tell you pretty accurately what they are. The day after tomorrow Father Abbona and myself are to meet the King in private, who wishes to consult us on the propriety and *safety* of some of the demands he intends to make.

I have been making particular inquiries about the family of the Tabayeen Mengyee. His mother is living at Tabayeen Myo, quite free and in good health. His wife and family are here, but inside of the town; they are in a measure free too, but I rather think that some person has got charge of them, or rather they have got some person to stand security that they will not leave

the place without the sanction of the King. Of this I will be able to write you more particularly in my next. Mong Gee I do not think could have any difficulty in getting some of his Burman friends to convey a letter to them. This would be better than any communication passing through my hands, for if it was found out, it would cause suspicion and perhaps get them into trouble again. The only possible way of getting them liberty to leave this, would be for you to petition the King direct in Burmese, when I have no doubt but they would be sent away at once. Of the propriety of this you will be the best judge.

The weights you wrote me for, were for the Paris Exhibition, and will be sent down in due time. They cost for the set—that is a viss not half a viss, &ca.—about $6\frac{1}{2}$ Rupees. The sale of them is farmed out by Government, and none allowed to be sold unless stamped; but for all this they are very irregular in size, some weighing a quarter of a tical more than others. I will send you those which I think the most correct.

The other day when I saw the King, he was speaking about the letter he caused me to write on the 18th July,¹ and wishes now that it had not been sent, as he says that he has found out that the information he then received was not correct.

You will I think have an opportunity of seeing the description of gun boats at present being built by the King. It is intended to employ two of them for the purpose of taking down the presents intended for the Governor General. The small steamer has also been ordered to be got ready, for the purpose, I suppose, of taking them in tow.

You ask me what I think will be the most appropriate presents for the King and Prince. The King, as you are aware, has got a whole host of children, of whom he is particularly fond, and I think that a selection of toys would prove very acceptable: I do not mean expensive ones, but those French and German toys, which cost in Calcutta from one to five Rupees each. Anything curious would always please. A Colts' revolver would give them a good idea of the improved state of fire-arms in Europe—mirrors of a large size would also be prized—good gold watches—a microscope of great power—a telescope of larger size than ordinary. In fact you can hardly go wrong in what you send.

I am in great hopes that the model pagoda will be ready to leave

this about the end of the month: some of the silver articles are finished. Whatever I can get ready will be sent away by the end of the month—and the remainder as soon after as possible. One of the sets of chessmen is finished, but the other set being of a more elaborate pattern will require a longer time; the putsoes and tamines are ready.

We have had some rain here lately but the weather is still oppressively warm.

I had almost forgot to tell you, that the King is going to try the cultivation of hemp on a somewhat larger scale than has been attempted before in this country. It is only used here for making twine and fishing nets; some specimens I have seen appear to be good. On the 4th of the month, if not before, I will again have the pleasure of writing you, and remain,

Yours very sincerely,

THOMAS SPEARS.

¹ *Vide* Letter No. 144, para. 1, and Letter No. 142, note 1.

158

Amarapoor, 3rd September, 1854.

My dear Captain Phayre,

On the 31st ultimo I had the pleasure of receiving your two letters of the 14th August. That which referred to the boundary near Toungoo, I had translated the next day and given in to the King.¹ He feels obliged to you for the communication, and desired me to say that he had been misled by the information he received from that quarter.

No opportunity has been lost by me of impressing on the King, and all others concerned here, the danger they will incur of losing Mendoon, should they delay to make a treaty. On the 28 August Father Abbona, Camerettee and myself had a private audience of the King. The first thing he spoke about was this letter for the Governor General, which he produced, and requested one of us to read aloud. But it being only the rough copy and not very plainly written, we all declined trying it, whereon His Majesty said: 'Well, I suppose I must do it myself.' Which having done, he asked what we thought of it. The letter being quite unexceptionable as far as it goes, we told him that

we thought it would do very well, suggesting that a copy of it should be given to the Envoy before leaving this, to show you in Rangoon, so that you might be satisfied the letter contained nothing improper. The King then addressing me, said: 'Now tell me truly what you think of the state of affairs in Pegu. Do you think the English will give up any portion of that country to me, now, or at any future time?' My answer to this was—after begging he would excuse me speaking plainly—that I was well acquainted with the intentions of the British Government on that point, and that my opinion was, that they would never give back any portion of the country to the southward of the boundary laid down, with the exception perhaps of Mendoon, and that it, I thought, could only be got back by coming to a speedy understanding with the Governor General. The next question put by the King was: 'Would the Governor General be angry, if the Envoy was to ask back Pegu, on condition that the expenses of the war was paid?' To this I answered that I did not know whether he would be angry or not, but that I was perfectly certain that it could not be got back, and that the demand might do harm, but could not possibly do any good. 'Well,' said the King, 'should the Governor General get angry, my Ambassador will have instructions to withdraw all demands, as I have not sent him round to Calcutta for the purpose of quarrelling, but that by an interchange of presents—which by my subjects will be looked upon as a sure sign that all differences have ceased to exist—promote a friendly intercourse between the two countries.' The King then spoke about Mendoon, and said that he hoped that it would be restored, even without a formal treaty; that his sending presents, and the Envoy declaring publicly that the boundary laid down by the British would be respected, was to all intents and purposes a treaty. To this I merely answered that I had no hopes of its being restored, unless a formal treaty was signed. But I said: 'Suppose the Governor General should return Mendoon, are you prepared to send down Commissioners to mark out that part of the boundary with Commissioners appointed by the British?' To this he answered, after some hesitation, that he would send. I put this question because I had heard, in another quarter, that even if Mendoon was restored, the King would not send down

people to mark out the boundary. His Majesty after speaking a little longer about the nature of the presents he is going to send, left us, and we then came away. As the Envoy will leave this positively on the 20th September, His Lordship, if so inclined, will be able to send a splendid supply of Burmese produce to the Paris Exhibition, the greater part of the presents being composed of things suitable for that purpose. The value altogether the King told me the other day will be about 40,000 Rupees (Ticals), or more—but not less.

Upon making further inquiries about the family of Tabyeen Woongyee, I find they are quite free, and have been so for many months past. Some of them are living inside of the town, and others away out, at Meeaday, a village six miles from Amara-poor. The Woongyee cannot have the least difficulty in communicating with them; they might even slip away from there quietly, if so inclined. But I think that any application just now (except from yourself), for liberty to go down, would be refused.

In my letter of the 26 ultimo I say: 'I am in great hopes that the model pagoda will be ready to leave this at about the end of the month.' This was a mistake; I meant the end of the Burman month, which will be the 20th September, and not the English month.

I observe what you say about the presents you have received from Calcutta to send here. If a flint gun cannot be had, you can send a percussion one, or a flint gun of shorter length than the one at first recommended. The King was well pleased to hear that you would allow his steamer to come up the river when it arrives from Calcutta. The Maguay Woongyee is again sick, and has not been able to attend the Lootdaw or Palace for the last fortnight.

Some days ago when at the Palace, I saw some bomb-shells, a few gingles, and other small fire arms; some of the bombs were empty but others were charged. On remarking that it was a very small amount of plunder, they had got from the Siamese, I was told that there was plenty more coming, and that the King had given liberty for each separate chief to present himself what he had taken from the enemy. Four elephants are said to have arrived.

In a few days more I will have a cargo boat by which I will

send all that I have been able to get ready for the Exhibition. What will still remain shall be sent down as soon after as possible.

Father Abbona desires to be remembered to you; he will write by next Burman dawk-boat, which will leave in eight days hence.

This is your own boat and costs 40 Rupees, and I am,
Yours sincerely,

THOMAS SPEARS.

¹ *Vide* Letter No. 142, note 1.

159

Amarapoorra, 11 September, 1854.

My dear Captain Phayre,

Five days ago a conspiracy was discovered here, which is said to have had the restoration of the old king as its object. A great number of people are implicated in this business, and the jails are now full. MOUNG BWA, the KYOUK PADOUNG WOON GEE, and almost all the great officers of the late king are again in confinement. MOUNG MYET TOON,¹ notwithstanding the kindness he has experienced at the hands of the present king, was also amongst the conspirators, and is now in irons. Not less than two hundred men are in confinement on account of this affair; some have been examined by torture; but what they have confessed has not yet become public.

The old king² is living in the same way as before, without any further restrictions being placed on him. He resides in a large house near the Palace, which has a garden attached, where he is allowed to recreate himself when he thinks proper. About a dozen of his former Queens, those whom he liked best, are permitted to live with him, to enliven his solitude.

The discovery of this conspiracy has caused very little sensation here, the present Government being too firmly established to have cause to dread any efforts that may be made by the old King's party. With the exception of the above everything here is quiet and going on in the usual way.

By a boat which leaves tomorrow, I have shipped the greater part of the articles ordered for the Paris Exhibition; they will go to Rangoon direct, and not touch at Prome. By the time

the next dawk-boat leaves, I trust all that remains will be ready for sending away.

I now forward you a letter from the Loot-daw. I believe it is merely a repetition of the last, giving you the day the Envoy leaves this: vizt. the 20th September (the 14 day of this Labe qua). The Maguay Woon Gee is still sick and not able to attend the Palace or Loot-daw.

For a fortnight past we have had abundance of rain, which, although rather late in the season, it is said will do much good to this year's rice crop. Cargo rice from Pegu is now selling at 130 ticals Yewtnee, a hundred baskets.

The last to you was of the 3rd instant by your own dawk boat, and trusting I may soon have the favor of hearing from you again,

I remain, yours sincerely,
THOMAS SPEARS.

¹ The famous dacoit *bo*.

² i.e. The deposed Pagan Min.

160

Rangoon, Sept. 29th, 1854.

My Lord,

I have received your Lordship's letter of the 12th inst. and again have to send back the *Zenobia*, as the explanation of the *Woongyee*, though in part satisfactory, is not fully and entirely so.¹ I cannot therefore allow the Envoy to embark for Bengal. I enclose a letter from Mr. Spears dated the 19th inst., in which he says the Envoy will reach Meeaday on the 30th inst., so that he may be here by the 4th or 5th proxo. As I cannot receive a reply from Ava to my last letter before about the 25th of October, if your Lordship thinks proper, *Zenobia* might again be dispatched about that time. These are very provoking people, and I hope my last letter, requiring a fresh letter announcing the appointment of an Envoy in proper language, will be approved of. In the mean time the Envoy shall be civilly treated here, but nothing more. They want to go to Bengal, no doubt, but like to try all these methods of raising their own dignity in their own estimation. The fact is, with the King's presents committed so far, they dare not return without going on, so that it is only a

question of how long they are willing to wrangle, and try to evade doing what they must do.

Everything continues quite quiet.

Your Lordship will have heard of the great mortality among the horses in Pegu. I am inclined to attribute it partly to the want of proper shelter for them. Lieut. Mackensie, the Second in Command of the 8th Irregular Cavalry, informs me that the horses of that regiment at Thayet myo have had no sheds built for them, although the detachments at Toungoo and Rangoon have had them erected by Government. I have written to Captain Pott, the Supt. Engineer, on the subject. I have not yet been able to get from Capt. Pott the report on the opening into the Bassein river, though I have written twice about it, and I hoped to have had it all ready to bring up with me, when I come.

That work and the canal to the Sitang river are the two principal public works still remaining to be discussed. The survey is in capital hands, and the electric telegraph I feel confident about. The road from Rangoon to Prome, the details of it that is, have still to be settled. The roads connecting the outposts with Thayet Myo and Meeaday have still to be put in hand, and in time a road from Toungoo to the frontier.

There will be this year a most glorious rice harvest, and if we can only make this Province a good cotton growing country for export to Europe, its value will be very soon acknowledged. I shall do all I possibly can to encourage the cotton plantations.

Your Lordship will probably hear that the men of the Second Bengal Fusiliers, who were sent down to Namayon from Prome, have been very sickly, and the detachment has been removed from there. I believe Dr. Forsyth considers that the place has been occupied too soon. They will not be sent back again before March next. This must be a warning to us as respects the occupation of Dalhousie. If we get the city and station marked out this year, and the troops are in barracks by March 1856, it will be quite early enough. I am, My Lord,

with much respect your obedient servant,

A. P. PHAYRE.

P.S. I hope the building called 'Pyathad', taken up by Mr. Blair, will give satisfaction. There was an image of Gautama

belonging to it, but as that does not contribute to its beauty, I did not think it necessary to have the idol removed.

¹ The reference here is to the letter of explanation received by Phayre from the Kyaukmaw Wungyi on 26 September in reply to his of 25 August stating his objections to the wording of the original letter announcing the appointment of the mission. He had already (18 Sept.) received a revised edition of the letter complained of, but had returned it as still unsatisfactory.

161

Amarapoora, 19 September, 1854.

My dear Captain Phayre,

By the Loot-daw dawk boat, which arrived early yesterday morning, I had the pleasure of receiving your note of the 25 ultimo. The letter for the Woongyee¹ I at once took to him; he appeared to be rather surprised at having it returned, but did not express any displeasure. You were perfectly right in sending this letter back again. Until I received your last letter I was not aware of their having used the objectionable phrases complained of by you, and was the more surprised at their having done so from having seen some ten days ago, the King's letter intended for the Most Noble the Governor General. In it His Lordship, I think, is treated in every respect as an equal. The same expression being there applied, when speaking of the presents sent from Amarapoora, and those expected from Bengal.

The Woongyee expresses himself sorry at having made use of terms objected to by you, and detained me in town all yesterday, until the Woongyees at the Loot-daw had drawn out another for him, apologizing for his having done so. In this letter—which I now forward—you will see that the Woongyee does not altogether take the blame on himself, but puts it or tries to put it, on the translation of the extract of your Calcutta letter of 3rd March.² After my explanation of this document, on its arrival, they had got the son of Mr. Camarettee to translate it again, and he according to Burmese custom not sticking close to the original, has lead them, they say, into the errors complained of by you.

In respect to the form of addressing you, I think that in future you will have no cause for complaint on that head. I will give you their explanation of this matter, and although it is rather

lame, there may be some truth in it. All Burmans begin their letter with their title or 'Buoy' in full, and when their letter is answered, this should again be copied into their address. Now you having only given your name, and it being composed of more words than one, *they say* gave rise to this mistake.³

I trust the apology now sent will prove satisfactory, and that things will go on in the same way as before. This dawk boat has been sent express by the Loot-daw, so that you may be put in possession of the Woongyee's letter before the Envoy arrives. The Envoy will leave tomorrow, and will reach Meeaday on the 9th of the La-tsan (30th September). I will write Captain Ardagh apprizing him of this.

No opportunity has been passed over by me in urging upon the King (and his Ministers) the advantages he would derive from having a definite treaty with the British Government. Father Abbona has also exerted himself on this head, but for all this I do not think that the Envoy will be furnished with powers sufficient to settle everything. I will inform the King about what you say regarding the Burman War Chief's full-dress, &c., and will take care that it is done in such a way that he cannot take offence. If I can persuade him to send it to the Exhibition on his own account, I will do so.

The presents for the King and Prince have not yet arrived. When they do, they will be disposed of in the way pointed out in your letter. Captain Ardagh mentions a bag of coals having been sent up in a merchant boat: this has also not yet arrived.

I last wrote you on the 13th with an invoice of sundries for the Paris Exhibition. This boat was unavoidably detained three days longer; but as we have had little southerly wind since it left, I trust it will have a quick passage to Rangoon. I have told the boatman to give your letter to the Collector of Customs there. Tomorrow I think I will be able to send the Cama-Wa-tsa⁴: it has cost silver equal to cys⁵ rupees 130, a very high price I have no doubt you will think. Two of the pictures that are finished will also be sent at the same time. These articles will be charged for in the next invoice I send: the pictures will cost about 15 rupees each. If I cannot get a ready made betelnut box of the description required by you, silver will at once be given to make new one.

Tomorrow I will go and see the King, and in my next let you know what he says about the Envoy now proceeding to Bengal.

Pray excuse this hasty written letter, as I wrote in a hurry to let the boat start at once, so that you may be put in possession of the Woongyee's letter without delay, and

I remain, yours very sincerely,

THOMAS SPEARS.

¹ *Vide* Letter No. 150, para. 1.

² *Vide* Letter No. 85, para. 1 and note 2. In his official letter of March 3rd, here referred to, Dalhousie, alluding to Mindon's expression to Spears of his desire to send an envoy with presents to the Governor-General, wrote: 'If the King should desire to send an Envoy with the presents, and should nominate an officer of high rank for the purpose, he will be received on board a British steamer at Meeaday, he will be conveyed in a steam Frigate to Calcutta, and he will everywhere be treated with the respect and distinction due to the representative of a Sovereign, who professes friendship towards the British Government. In such a case an officer of Rank will be deputed with presents to His Majesty, if assurance is given that he will be received with similar marks of respect at Amarapoor. After having delivered the presents he will return.' (*I.S.P.*, Cons. 31 Mar. 1854, No. 12.) This was the extract referred to by Spears.

³ Phayre had also complained that in the Wungyi's letter his own name 'was not mentioned with the usual title but an abrupt and uncourteous style used'. (*I.S.P.*, Cons. 26 Jan. 1855, No. 1.)

⁴ Cama-wa-tsa. *Vide* Letter No. 148, note 1.

⁵ Company's, i.e. East India Co.'s.

162

Private. Govt. House, October 5th, 1854.

My dear Phayre,

I have received your letter of 22nd Sept. and last night that of 29th. You have done quite right in rejecting any explanation which was not explicit and fully satisfactory, and in returning the letter a second time.¹ I agree with you in thinking that they are merely trying it on, and that in the end they will adjust everything as we desire. But delays are tiresome, inconvenient, and by Zenobia's repeated bootless errands will become expensive. Everything will be ready here. The 2nd and 3rd class Envoys can all be lodged with the Principal Envoy in the Fort² Government House, if they choose to go two in a room. If they don't

like that, some of them will have quarters in the Staff barracks close at hand. Let me know, when you can, which they would prefer.

Let me say here, that in asking you to come up with them it is by no means my intention that you should be in any way in attendance on them. That must be left to officers of inferior rank. Your coming is for *me*.

Mr. Oldham, the geological professor, thinks lightly, I am sorry to say, of the Ava coal in point of quality. I am in hopes of getting a man exclusively for the Bassein and Sitang Canals. The mortality of the horses disturbs me—and seems to point to bullock batteries rather than Horse Batteries. On this I have been anxious to see you. I am sorry to hear of sickness at Numagan. It is the fault of the military people themselves. Your harvest prospects are excellent.

The allies have taken Bumarsund on the Aland islands, a difficult job well done at small loss. I will endeavour to send you copies of the dispatches, which you may send to our friends up country.

Yours sincerely,
DALHOUSIE.

¹ *Vide* Letter No. 160, note 1.

² i.e. Fort William.

163

Rangoon, Octr. 9th, 1854.

My Lord,

At last the Envoy has arrived¹ with a great number of packages containing presents for your Lordship. There are also ten ponies which are not first rate specimens of the Burmese breed. I have been somewhat astounded at their requesting passages for 98 persons in all to Calcutta. After referring to them more than once on the subject they adhere to the number. I will send some of them up in a transport as they cannot well all come in Zenobia. I have given every honor to the Envoy, except a public audience, and this I have reserved until the required letter from Amara-poorra shall have been received. I trust your Lordship will approve of this proceeding. I suppose I shall have a reply from Amarapoorra about the 25th or 26th inst., and if satisfactory I

will embark as soon as possible. From Kedgree or elsewhere I will telegraph to your Lordship any necessary intelligence regarding the Envoy. In my private audience with him he was very friendly. He has been to pay his devotions to the Pagoda.

Everything continues to be perfectly quiet in this Province. The posts for the electric telegraph are being collected, and as soon as the water subsides will be put up. Mr. Wickam has arrived and will go up to see the line. I am, My Lord,

with much respect your obedient servant,

A. P. PHAYRE.

¹ On 5 October; he made his official landing on the 6th, being received by Captain Sparks, Deputy-Commissioner of Rangoon, Dr. Morton, Magistrate of Rangoon, Captain Lloyd, Assistant-Magistrate, and Mr. R. S. Edwards, the Collector of Customs. There was a guard of honour in attendance. Salutes of 13 guns were fired by the steamer (*H.C.S. Mahanuddy*) and by the cantonment saluting battery. Lieutenant Ardagh, the Deputy-Commissioner of Prome, accompanied the Envoy. As the Court of Ava had not yet sent a satisfactory revision of the letter announcing the Mission, Phayre accorded no official interview to the Envoy, but paid him a private visit. 'Everything was most friendly,' he wrote to the Governor-General. (*I.S.P.*, Cons. 26 Jan. 1855, No. 12.)

164

Private. Govt. House, Oct. 16th, 1854.

My dear Phayre,

I have received your letter of 9th inst. The good humour of the Envoy and the tone of the Woongyees' first reply lead me to anticipate that the difficulty about the letter will be set to rights. I will send off Zenobia on 19th. I have seen Captain Rennie, who says that he will be able to bring the whole, 98 followers and 10 ponies included. I think this would make a great mess; and that if you have, or can get, a transport, the Zenobia might tow her. However, I leave this for you and Capt. Rennie to settle. There will be no difficulty in accommodating the followers here. If there arises any necessity for more reference you had better keep Zenobia, unless there be some special reason for sending her back. For in these times the passage of an empty steamer costs money.

Berenice goes tomorrow with troops and will carry this to

you. I observe you paid your last letter. Demi-official letters on public affairs only are intended to go free.

Yours sincerely,

DALHOUSIE.

165

Rangoon, Oct. 27th, 1854.

My Lord,

The Zenobia arrived last evening. By Berenice I received your Lordship's letter of the 16th inst. I have not yet received from Amarapoora a reply to my letter of the 26th ulto., but I believe I must do so in three or four days more. I purpose bringing up the ponies and all the followers in the King's ship.¹ I do not anticipate that any further reference will be necessary. They must, I think, give in.

I see a report in the papers that the Envoys are determined to go to England. I fear it is too good news to be true. A journey of these men to England, it is to be hoped, would open the eyes of their Court. But it is too improbable.

The Envoys lately proceeded up to pray at the Pegu Pagoda, and on returning the Dalla Woon sent me a message with a half share of the merit he had acquired by the act. So we continue very good friends, though I have not yet received him publicly. I am, My Lord,

with much respect your obedient servant,

A. P. PHAYRE.

¹ The ship belonging to the King of Burma, captured by Commodore Lambert in the Rangoon River, when the new Governor of Rangoon refused to receive Commander Fishbourne on the 6th of January 1852.

166

Private. Govt. House, Nov. 4th, 1854.

My dear Phayre,

I have received your letter by the Nemesis, and judge from it that the Envoy may be expected. An official letter has been sent to you at Kedgeree. I enclose a rough plan of the Government House in the Fort, wherein all the six Envoys will be well accommodated and their servants near them.

I have made arrangements to receive him with due respect. Five of my carriages will carry him to the Fort escorted by B. Guard. I presume he will (he ought) to land in his official apparel. He can only land well about 4.30 to 5 P.M. If you could time the movements of Zenobia accordingly, good and well. I enclose you our first account of the action fought near Sebastopol.

Yours sincerely,
DALHOUSIE.

167

Rangoon, Novr. 10th, 1854.

My Lord,

From the letters of Mr. Spears, which I enclose, and from the public dispatch which goes by Sesostris, your Lordship will see that further delay in the embarkation of the Envoys is unavoidable.¹ Indeed, from its appearing probable that even another month might elapse before everything would be in proper train, I at one time thought of coming up in Sesostris to wait upon your Lordship; but I have since thought it best to see what one other arrival from Prome may bring. Should there then be no appearance of the speedy arrival of the desired letter from Amarapoora, it probably would be as well for the Zenobia to bring up some of the troops, which will be in readiness for embarkation in a few days more, and I could also come with them. Should the Envoys not embark for another month, and I have to wait for them here, I shall be very much inconvenienced as regards my visit to the upper portion of the Province. Tharawaddee has still to be thoroughly and deliberately gone over, and I must go across to Toungoo. I am therefore anxious to be free to commence this work by the middle of December. If, therefore, my duty to your Lordship will admit of this being done, I should feel grateful for your permission to act accordingly.

The King has written to offer his wheat next year on the same terms as before. I think however we might take it at a lower rate, say 200 Rs. to 220 Rs. the 100 baskets. Receiving the wheat at Prome is a great convenience and relieves the steamers very much. The King also through Mr. Spears wishes to receive

some of our wheat for seed. May I present him with about 50 bags? Mr. Spears also mentions that the King is making advances on the cotton crop, and is thus personally interested in the preservation of peace.

I beg to enclose a statement of the receipts at the Rangoon Custom House for the last six months.

The electric telegraph line is going on, and the first wires, just fronting the Envoy's house here, are up. They are very anxious to know the object in view, which they appear to think is mysterious. This morning the Envoys paid me a private visit, and the 'Dalla Woon' asked me if the 'Lord Company' who ruled India in the time of the last war, was still alive, and what office he held in England. I replied that he was, and belonged to the Privy Council. He merely remarked that his Lordship must know this country well, the evils of war, &ca., &ca.

I am sorry to say that the troops at Prome are suffering very much from fever and other sickness. At Thayet Myo they are in excellent health; and the 10th N.I. at Henzada have never been better. Prome then is the only place which appears to be unfavourable to health.

I have written this mail regarding an Executive Engineer for Bassein. This is very urgently required, and I hope your Lordship will approve of Lieutenant Newmarch, who has been recommended.

I am very much concerned to say that I have not yet been able to get the report on the opening of the Bassein river. The Supt. Engineer, Captain Pott, has written to Lieut. Maxwell, (the officer entrusted with the survey) several times on the subject. I was in hopes when I came up to Calcutta to bring this report with me, but I now fear I shall not be able to do so. It is the only matter of importance, except the Light House on the Negrais, which is at a stand still.

I am, My Lord,

with much respect your obedient servant,

A. P. PHAYRE.

¹ In the public dispatch Phayre mentioned having just received a letter from the Kyaukmaw Wungyi in which he intimated that he awaited a report from the Envoy of his arrival and reception at Rangoon

before replying to Phayre's last letter. In this letter, written on the 27th of September after receipt of the Wungyi's letter of explanation (*vide* Letter No. 160, note 1), he had in accordance with Dalhousie's instructions announced the equality of the Governor-General with the kings and rulers in Asia, and explained the proper style of address applicable to him. (*I.S.P.*, Cons. 26 Jan. 1855, No. 8B.) The old Wungyi, it appeared, feared that the official letter, entrusted to the Envoy for delivery to the Governor-General, also required alteration. Hence the delay. (*Ibid.*, No. 15.)

168

Amarapoora, 11 October, 1854.

My dear Major Phayre,

By the Loot daw daw boat which came in on the 9th I had the pleasure of receiving your letter of the 20th ultimo accompanied by the Woongyee's rejected letter No. 2, which I took to him next morning. This letter the Woongyee did not open, and said he would not do so until he received an answer to that which left this on the 19 ultimo. His apology must have come to hand long before this and has, I trust, put everything to rights again.

Some time ago I wrote you the conspirators had all been released, not one having been put to death. No man of rank belonging to the present King's party was implicated in it. It was all amongst the deposed King's followers and had, as before stated, as its object the restoration of the old King. The old King denied having any knowledge himself of this conspiracy, and recommended his brother to put them, the conspirators, all to death.

The Kyouk Mau Woongyee is now well again and able to attend the Lootdaw and Palace.

I am happy to hear you are likely to have a good harvest this year. The crops in this part of the country are equally promising, and if we only have a little rain next month, rice will be as cheap here as it is with you.

In my last I mentioned that the King of Sardinia wished to enter into a commercial treaty with His Majesty of Burma. A letter and draft of treaty (forwarded by M. Casella, Calcutta consul, I believe, for Sardinia) was transmitted and presented to the King yesterday. The King's answer was that he did not

wish to enter into any treaty, but that should any subjects of the King of Sardinia find their way up here, they would be protected and receive every encouragement from him. This draft of treaty I have seen, but being in Italian, I could not make much out of it. One particular article of the treaty the King decidedly objected to, and that was the placing of a consul here. As this is no secret now, I will ask F. Abbona for a copy of the draft treaty, and if I can get it, send it down to you by next boat.

In a small box to your address I now send the silver cup and stand with a betelnut box of 'open fret work', (costing as per note enclosed). I am not quite certain whether I describe this box correctly by calling it open fret work. This sort of work is very expensive here, and if made to order would cost in workmanship double its weight in silver. In the betelnut box I have packed a ruby ring weighing $6\frac{1}{2}$ rutties. Should it be approved of for the Exhibition, you can take it at the price it cost me vizt: 550 Rs. But if not wanted, then kindly send it over to my Rangoon agents, Messrs. Johnstone, Barlas and Co. I am sorry I have not been able to get a good sapphire or good ruby for the Exhibition: there is not one in the market that I could recommend conscientiously for that purpose. The ruby I now send was purchased before I received your order.

As you have told me to make up my accounts at the end of every three months, I now enclose you my salary bill for July, August and September, also a bill for dawk boat hire, incurred for the same period. Both those bills are made payable to Messrs. Johnstone, Barlas and Co.

Some guns, and a few more odds and ends have arrived from the Shan country, part of the spoil taken from the Siamese. I am also told that some elephants have arrived, but those I have not seen.

Lead from the Shan country still continues to arrive, but not in the same quantity as at first promised.

And I remain, my dear Major Phayre,
yours very sincerely,

THOMAS SPEARS.

P.S. I have written Mr. Barlas to secure a piece of ground for me for the purpose of building a house in Rangoon. You are

perhaps aware that I held a godown there before the war in the best part of the town. Could you assist him in this matter, I shall feel particularly obliged. Pray excuse my giving you this trouble.

T. S.

169

Amarapoorra, 20th October, 1854.

My dear Major Phayre,

I had the pleasure of receiving your letters of the 16th and 18th ultimo (by a small boat dispatched from Prome by Captain Ardagh) on the 17th inst. The two letters to the Woongyee's address I at once took to him.

Allow me to return you my best thanks for the two numbers of the 'Friend of India' you were so kind as to send me; they were very acceptable indeed.

I now forward you two letters from the Kyouk Maw Woongee, not exactly, I am sorry to say, the same as required by you. He says he wishes to hear from Mong Bathee before writing any more on the subject of the mission to Bengal. One of the letters sent by him, it seems, contains matter that may be objected to by you, and will most likely be sent back again for alterations. This being the case the Woongyee proposes waiting until he receives dispatches from Rangoon, when any alterations, that may be required, can be done at one time and the matter finally settled.

I have little doubt but Mong Bo will lose his situation, orders have been sent down to make strict inquiries into the dacoities that have been taking place on the frontier.¹

I am sorry to hear that the articles I have dispatched to you for the Paris Exhibition have not yet come to hand. The boat in which they were sent, I have heard, has reached Prome some three weeks ago.

Father Abbona goes very seldom to the Palace now, and tries [*sic*] to keep himself as much out of the Calcutta mission business as he possibly can do. He says that he is sorry that he ever had anything to do with it.

To-day I have written a letter for the Woongyees to your address. I could not well refuse doing so, but, of course, it can

be looked upon in no other light than that of a private letter, or so much waste paper, if you like. If I had ever represented myself here as being anything else than a private individual, your last letter to the Woongyee would have put me into a fine mess.² As it is, it has, if anything, rather improved my position. Is the Governor General displeased at anything that I have been doing up here? The Woongyee's putting either my name or Father Abbona's in their letters was not known to us.

From running about in the sun for the last three days I have got a severe headache, so pray excuse this hastily written letter.

Everything is quiet here. And I remain,

yours very sincerely,

THOMAS SPEARS.

P.S. I sincerely thank you for your official letter of 29th Augt. regarding my compensation money.³ It came to hand on the 17th inst. with the other letters. You have been put to a great deal of trouble in this business.

THOMAS SPEARS.

¹ *Vide* Letter No. 150, note 1. One of the letters from the Wungyi to Phayre, referred to here, dealt with the Ledi dacoity, and announced that Maung Bo, its instigator, had been summoned to the capital. (*I.S.P.*, Cons. 26 Jan. 1855, No. 15.)

² *Vide* Letter No. 150, note 1.

³ *Vide* Letter No. 134, note 1

170

Govt. House, Nov. 21st, 1854.

My dear Phayre,

I write in the greatest haste to save the Sesostris mail. I exceedingly regret the delay of the Mission. It is very inconvenient to me as well as to you. I am so sensible of the importance of the latter consideration, that I would most willingly exempt you from the duty of coming up with the Envoys. But we shall be so entirely at sea without you, that I find it impossible to dispense with your presence.

I hope it may not be necessary to detain you.

Yours in great haste sincerely,

DALHOUSIE.

171

Rangoon, November 18th, 1854.

My Lord,

The desired letter from the Woongyee at Ava has at length arrived.¹ Being satisfactory I immediately gave the envoys a public reception and yesterday they stated that they wished to embark on Wednesday the 22d inst.² I have therefore made arrangements for doing so early on that morning. As there is no transport available here for bringing up the numerous followers of the envoys I have arranged that Zenobia shall take the Enterprize in tow. At first the 'Dalla Woon', the Woondouk, who is the Second in the mission, and the Armenian, Makertich, agreed to go in the Zenobia, but now they want to go in the Enterprize so as all to be together, they say. However, they are like so many children and may change their minds once more.

It is quite certain they have not power to make a treaty as regards the boundary, although when asked by Mr. Edwards at my desire, the Woondouk pretended they had. Makertich said they had not. Mr. Edwards by my desire informed them that any question regarding Mendoon would not be kept open beyond about Christmas. This they fully understand. But your Lordship will remember that Mr. Spears reported before, that they would not have powers to treat about the boundary.

Leaving this on Wednesday the 22d, I believe Captain Rennie expects to reach Kedgree by Sunday the 26th, and we will then await orders from your Lordship.

We have not received the mail due on the 14th inst. by Tenasserim and are wondering what can have become of the steamer.

As I shall so soon report myself to your Lordship in person, I will not write a long letter. I am, My Lord,

with much respect your obedient servant,

A. P. PHAYRE.

P.S. I wished to get from the envoys a copy of the King's letter to your Lordship, as well to see that it was properly worded as to save time about translation in Calcutta. They did not wish, however, to show it, so I have not pressed the matter.

¹ On the 14th of November: Phayre and Brigadier-General Steel

with all the officers of the garrison officially received the envoys in their state robes on the 16th.

² 'That being considered by them a propitious day', wrote Phayre in his official dispatch (*I.S.P.*, Cons. 26 Jan. 1855, No. 20).

172

Amarapoora, 20th October, 1854.

To Major Phayre

Commissioner of Pegu and Agent to the Governor General

Dear Sir,

Your two letters for the Lootdaw were received on the 17th instant and duly delivered on the same day. By the return dawk boat I have now the honor of forwarding you the Kyouk Maw Woongyee's reply.

The Kyouk Maw Woongyee directs me to inform you that the envoy now proceeding to Bengal, besides being furnished with letters for the Most Noble the Governor General has also a letter for you, and another from the officers of the Court here addressed to the British Officers or authorities residing in India. The letter to the Most Noble the Governor General, and also that for yourself, the Woongees believe to be written in the style and manner pointed out by you. But in that which is addressed to the authorities in India they think there may be some alterations required. As the envoy is furnished with copies of those letters, which will be shewn you in Rangoon, you can point out to him what alterations are required. He will then communicate with the Court here, when fresh letters will be written, or the old ones altered to any form you may think proper.

But for the reasons stated above, the Kyouk Maw Woongyee would have written the letter you require of him now. He only waits to hear from the envoy, when he will do himself that honor.

The Kyouk Maw Woongyee desires me to inform you that orders have been sent down to make strict inquiries into the dacoities that have taken place on the frontier. And I have the honor to be, Dear Sir,

your most obedient servant,

THOMAS SPEARS.

173

Amarapoorra, 25th October, 1854.

My dear Major Phayre,

Since writing you on the 20th inst. with the two letters from the Woongyee, nothing of importance has taken place here; the Woongyee will not write you again until he hears from Mong Bathee.

The King does not deny that the extract of your Calcutta letter of the 3d March was written and sent up here in consequence of a question put to you at his request—in my letter of the 8th January—inquiring whether the Governor General would receive presents from him. Although the fact of this question having been put to you (at the King's request) has been frequently brought to the notice of the Woongyees, they seem to have entirely overlooked it in communicating to you the dispatch of an envoy to Bengal, and so all this confusion. As things now stand, perhaps the Wounggee is right in waiting until he hears from Mong Bathee before writing again, so as to allow of all alterations and omissions being corrected at the same time.

I trust we will have no more dacoities on the frontier. People have been sent from this to make particular inquiries into the last. In the mean time Mong Bo has been called up to give an account of his trust, and if found wanting will, I have little doubt, lose his situation, if not otherwise punished.

On the 12th inst. I wrote Captain Dickins of the Prome Commissariat at the request of the King, offering him next year's wheat and gram on the same terms as has been paid for this year's crop. But this offer I do not expect will be accepted. It is supposed that more wheat will be sown this year than last; the time for putting it in the ground is now near at hand.

Large advances have been made by the King for next year's cotton crop, which would all be so much money lost to him, should there be any disturbance in this country, as he is, as you may say, in a manner bound down to keep the peace. He has also made large advances for timber and other produce, which would also be lost to him in case of war.

Mong Bwa the Governor of Ya-mae-then appears to keep his district in good order, no complaints having been received

from that quarter since he has been in charge. Some ten days ago he sent the King a few things which he had received, he said, as presents from the authorities at Toungoo.

During the day the sun is still oppressively warm, but the nights are cool, the dew beginning to shew on the grass in the morning. The river for the last ten days has been rising, and is high for the season of the year. Yesterday it began to fall a little. Some of the cultivation on the river side will be destroyed by this, but not to any great extent. There is a report that a worm has got amongst the paddy crops, but this wants confirming. And I remain,

Yours very sincerely,
THOMAS SPEARS.

174

Undated. [Evidently a chit sent by hand.]

Dear Phayre,

I am afraid you will be so sulky at your diplomatic deportation that I am half afraid to welcome you on your arrival. However I *will* venture to say you are welcome.

The arrangements for landing stand as proposed. Capt. D'Oyly will come to you with this, and I will beg you to arrange with him who are to go in the different carriages. Without this there will be confusion. You can either put the Envoys together or mix Europeans with them. The Envoy should, of course, go in the last carriage, the Landau.

I reserve all else till we meet.

Yours sincerely,
DALHOUSIE.

175

Private. Government House, Nov. 25th, 1854.

My dear Phayre,

I received yesterday your letter of the 18th inst. I am glad to hear that all crooked things are at last made straight, and that you are on your way up. I send this to Kedgereee merely to say that arrangements will stand as in a former dispatch. The Envoys should land from 4.30 to 5 p.m., and if you reach

Kedgree on Sunday, I should like you to be up on the forenoon of Monday; so as to give a few hours after your arrival before the landing.

I shall be very happy if you will take up your quarters in Government House. At the same time you may prefer some of your friends. If so, I beg you will say so without any hesitation.

Yours sincerely,

DALHOUSIE.

176

Zenobia, near Diamond Harbour, November 27th, 1854.

My Lord,

In passing Kedgree I received your Lordship's letters of the 4th and 25th inst. but from a disarrangement of the electric telegraph we have not been able to wait there for further orders.

Captain Rennie expects to reach Calcutta at noon tomorrow. I will immediately come ashore and wait upon your Lordship, and I respectfully accept your Lordship's invitation to Government House.

The presents brought by the Envoys will require three hundred coolies, and a horse boat will be necessary to land the ponies, ten (10) in number. The envoys will land in their official dresses, and are anxious that all the boxes containing the presents should be carried up at the same time that they are proceeding. I showed them the plan of the Government House in the Fort. They are most profuse in their acknowledgments of all that has been done for them, and appear really grateful for your Lordship's kindness. The Second Envoy, who has the rank of Woondouk, and takes the lead in the embassy, requested permission to keep the plan to send to Ava. They have showed me a copy of the King's letter to your Lordship; at least, what, they say, is a draft of it written from memory. It is written in a proper style: states that the letter is sent, and the presents, for the sake of friendship, and requests a return letter.

I have not received the official dispatch, mentioned in your Lordship's letter of the 4th as having been sent to Kedgree.

Captain Rennie tells me he purposes taking Zenobia to her former moorings, and Enterprize will be anchored near, so that

will, I believe, answer well for the Ghat it is intended the Envoys shall land at.

I am much obliged for the account of the action fought at Sebastopol enclosed with your Lordship's letter. I beg to enclose my last two letters from Mr. Spears.¹

I am, My Lord,

with much respect your obedient servant,

A. P. PHAYRE.

P.S. The presents are contained in 140 boxes and will require several boats to land them and perhaps a guard to escort them. Captain Rennie has written regarding these to Captain Bowie.

¹ Probably Nos. 172 and 173 *supra*; but the order of the Letters in the Dalhousie Collection is retained here.

The salient features of the Burmese Mission to Calcutta (27 Nov. to 28 Dec. 1854) are set forth in the brief, but picturesque, account given in Lee-Warner's *Life of Dalhousie*, pp. 27-30, though it may be noted that he erroneously gives Makertich's name as Mackintosh (p. 28). The Envoys were magnificently fêted and received every possible mark of honour. More than three weeks slipped by in this way with nothing achieved other than the usual pious mouthings about friendship and goodwill. Anything more definite was scrupulously avoided by the envoys. At last, when the date of their departure had been fixed for the 28th of December, they asked for a private interview with the Governor-General. This was accorded on the 23rd. To Lord Dalhousie's amazement—he had expected the interview to be of a purely formal leave-taking nature—the Envoys quite unexpectedly brought forward a dramatic request for the complete restoration of the conquered province. His note of what took place (*I.S.P.*, Cons. 26 Jan. 1855, No. 36) is as follows:—

After the usual complimentary conversation the Governor-General said: 'I wish to know, Major Phayre, whether the only object of the deputation of the Envoys by H.M. the King of Ava was the delivery of the friendly letter which they brought or whether they were furnished with powers to negotiate any Treaty.'

Major Phayre: 'The Envoys have this morning written a few words which they desire to have explained to Your Lordship.'

Governor-General: 'I shall be happy to listen to any representation which the Envoys desire to make.'

A paper was then produced by the Woondouk Maha Meng Deng Meng Gyou and read out passage by passage, each passage being interpreted by Major Phayre. The substance of this document was as follows:

'By reason of the friendship which existed of old between the British Government and His Majesty's ancestors we have been deputed with a letter and presents to your Lordship. The War, which unhappily

interrupted the amicable relations between the two States, originated in a very trifling circumstance and is to be deeply regretted. Now Peace has been restored and His Majesty is anxious for its continuance. But it is the custom of all Governments that on the return of Peace things should be restored to the position they were in before the commencement of war. We represent therefore that the villages and lands which have been occupied by the British Government may now be restored to H.M. the King of Ava. We trust that if we be entrusted with a reply to the letter which we have delivered to the Most Noble the Governor-General we may be made acquainted with its contents.' The paper closed with expressions of friendly feeling and goodwill.

Governor-General: 'Am I to understand that the restoration of the territories now in our possession is put forward by the Envoys as a condition of the continuance of peace?'

Major Phayre: 'No, My Lord. The Envoys merely explain that it is the custom of States on the return of peace to restore things to the footing on which they stood before Peace was disturbed.'

Governor-General: 'Then, Major Phayre, you will be good enough to inform the Envoys that I am to reply to their representation distinctly and frankly.

'The war was not commenced by the British Government. It was commenced by the King of Ava.

'The occupation of territory that followed the cessation of war was forced upon us by a regard for our own security and our own interests.

You may tell the Envoys that so long as the sun shines, which they see, those territories will never be restored to the Kingdom of Ava.

'The King of Ava has sent me a friendly letter, and I will cause a reply, couched in the like friendly terms, and equally expressive of a desire for the maintenance of amicable relations to be addressed to His Majesty, and the Envoys shall be made acquainted with its contents.

'I will do more than this. The King of Ava has shewn his confidence in the British Government by withdrawing a portion of his Troops from the Frontier. I entirely reciprocate this confidence, and will as soon as may be possible recal [*sic*] some of our troops from the Frontier in like manner.

'I have already made known to the Envoys that at the proper season of the year an embassy will be sent on the part of the Government of India with a letter and presents to the King of Ava and I trust that His Majesty in the wisdom which he has shown on many occasions will seize that opportunity to confirm by a formal Treaty the professions of friendship which are expressed in the letter the Envoys have brought.

'I myself have full confidence in the good and amicable intentions of His Majesty, but there are those who do not feel satisfied and secure without a formal Treaty, and there are among ourselves here many merchants who may be deterred from pursuing a trade with the Kingdom of Ava by the consideration that no such engagement has been executed.

'It is the practice of every civilized nation, such as the Burman nation is, being in amicable relations with its neighbours, to confirm those relations by a Treaty. I repeat therefore the expression of my hope that His Majesty will see fit in his wisdom to conform to this custom and to enter into a Treaty of Friendship with the British Government.'

The Governor-General's speech was explained passage by passage to the Envoys by Major Phayre.

The Mengyee. Meng Maha Meng Gaung Gaya replied in a few words to the following effect.

'The quarrel which led to the war arose in the time of the late King now deposed. He was hostile. His present Majesty is friendly and is anxious for the continuance of amicable relations.'

Governor-General: 'Tell the Envoys that we did not go to war with the King but with the Nation. Nations war with nations; not individuals with individuals.'

The Woundauk (Maha Meng Deng Meng Gyan) rejoined: 'The present King of Ava is friendly to the British Government. It is the custom of States on the restoration of Peace to give proof of a desire for its continuance and of friendly sentiments by some concession.'

Governor-General: 'What is past is past. The declarations which were made at the termination of the war are fixed and irrevocable.'

The Governor-General then said: 'The Envoys have now, I believe, seen everything that is worthy of their notice and they will be glad to return. A Frigate is prepared to convey them to Rangoon, and I wish the Envoys a safe and prosperous journey to Amarapoora.'

177

Rangoon, January 10th.

My Lord,

We arrived here on the 3d inst. Everything in Pegu gets on well except the climate of Prome, which, I am sorry to say, does not appear to improve. Major Allan has been obliged to come down here in consequence of an attack of fever. He expects, however, to be able to return to his duties in a few days more. Should he be obliged to go away the loss of his services would be severely felt. A force is out in Tharawaddee driving out Goung Gye, and I trust this will be the last of him.

I find the officers and soldiers very anxious for the order permitting their wives to join them at Thayet Myo, and I think this may be safely allowed at all stations on the banks of the Irrawaddy, except the posts along the Tharawaddy river face.

I beg to enclose two copies of letters from Mr. Spears. The marble pagoda has not yet come to hand. When it does, I will

send it to your Lordship. I believe it will prove a handsome model. The treaty with the King of Sardinia does not appear of much importance. It appears that Father Abbona has recommended that a friendly letter to the King should be sent. If an envoy arrives for that purpose, shall I allow him to proceed up without molestation?

The Roman Catholic Bishop here has forwarded a petition to your Lordship for some pecuniary assistance in the building of a Catholic church in the Rangoon Cantonment. The church is exclusively for the soldiers and followers, and I have forwarded on the petition, which I hope will be approved of.

I leave this for Prome in a few days more, and intend to make the best of my way from there to Toungoo. I am, My Lord,
with much respect your obedient servant,

A. P. PHAYRE.

P.S. On the way down the Woondouk showed me his memo. of the conversation when they took leave of your Lordship. Your Lordship's reply to their demand for Pegu was altered to 'that it would not be proper to give back territory'. He acknowledged that he dared not write what your Lordship said, as it would be too peremptory to repeat to the King! I believe the Envoys now fear they have got into a scrape, as they certainly had no orders to make the demand they did.

178

Amarapoora, 9th December, 1854.

My dear Major Phayre,

I had last the pleasure of writing to you on the 2nd instant by a merchant boat under cover to Captain Sparks. Nothing of the least importance has taken place here since.

I now enclose you a translation of the treaty the King of Sardinia wished to enter into with His Majesty of Burmah, it is, you will see, a very harmless one, and I now forward it on to you more as a curiosity in its way, than anything else. Enclosed is also a copy in Burmeas of the letter written by Father Abbona to M. Casella (by the order of the Lootdaw) in answer

to his letter on the subject.¹ You will see by it that the King does not fancy written treaties. Or it perhaps may be, that he thinks if the British find out that he has been making treaties with other nations, they may perhaps force him to do the same thing with them. F. Abbona desires me to say that he does not wish his name mentioned in connection with this business.

I will pay particular attention to what you say about the troops being relieved at Theret Myow (Thayetmyo). Should the King hear of the movement below, I will put him in possession of the true cause.

Amarapoorra has been particularly healthy this season, but the boatmen on the river complain much of sickness. Some of the rice boats coming up have been obliged to sell their cargoes at the villages below, the boatmen being laid up with fever. This year we have not had a single case of cholera in Burma proper, that I have heard of. I hope you have been equally fortunate in the lower provinces.

Although I have made particular inquiries, I have not been able to learn anything that would lead me to suppose that the Burmeas have any intention of attacking the Karennee country.

The cold weather having set in, the Burmeas according to custom are out almost every morning practising at a mark with great guns and muskets. With the musket they get on pretty well, and are good shots. But with cannon they generally fire very wide of the mark, on account of the shots not fitting the guns properly.

In a few days more I will again do myself the pleasure of writing you, and remain,

Yours very sincerely,

THOMAS SPEARS.

¹ *Vide* No. 179 for an English translation of it.

[*Copy*]

Project of a treaty between His Majesty the King
of Sardinia and the Emperor of Burmah.

In the name of the true God.

His Majesty the King of Sardinia and the Emperor
of Burmah wishing to enter into a commercial and
friendly treaty appoint as their plenipotentiaries

..... on the part of Sardinia
 Burmah

The Plenipotentiaries having each communicated to the other their full powers do agree to the following articles:

Article 1st There shall be perpetual peace and friendship between the King of Sardinia and His Majesty the Emperor of Burmah their Heirs and Successors. The subjects of both countries will also live peaceably together.

Approved
 of by the
 King

Article 2d. His Majesty the King of Sardinia and His Majesty the Emperor of Burmah will each permit within their respective dominions free and full liberty of conscience to the subjects of each, with the right to build churches and schools without reference to sect or religion.

Approved
 of

3d Article The high contracting parties will allow the subjects of each other full liberty to trade and carry on their respective callings in any part of their dominions, the high contracting parties merely reserving to themselves the right of monopolising certain articles.

Approved
 of

4th Article That the subjects of the high contracting parties must conform themselves to the law and custom of the country in which they reside. That on no pretext shall either of the high contracting parties attempt to levy forced loans on the subjects of the other. That neither party will force the subjects of the other to serve in the Army or Navy.

Approved
 of by the
 King

5th Article That no parties be charged on moveable and immoveable property in excess of the custom of the respective countries the parties may for the time being be residents of.

Approved
 of

6th Article That the subjects of the high contracting parties be at full liberty to purchase moveable property of any description, and again to dispose of the same in any manner they may think proper. Should the subjects of either contracting parties come into possession of any description of pro-

Approved
 of

party, whether by inheritance, purchase, or deed of gift, neither Governments will charge more than the customary duties of the country the party concerned may be residing in.

Article 7th

Approved
of

That no higher duties will be levied on the exports and imports of the respective subjects of the contracting parties, than those charged to the most favored nations. Any privileges or advantages the two contracting parties may grant to other nations, to be ceded to each other, excepting where payment or something in lieu of the privilege has been made. In that case an equivalent will be required, if either of the contracting parties may wish to enjoy the same advantages.

Article 8th

Not
approved
of

That the two contracting parties will have the right of establishing a consulate in the territories of each other for the purpose of protecting the commerce of their subjects. But the consul will have no right or privilege until he is recognized by the Government of the country to which he is sent. The Government of the country to which he is sent also reserves to itself the right of nominating the city where the consul will reside.

9th Article

Not
approved
of

When the consul has been recognized he will then have the right to plead the cause (in the courts of the country he is residing in) and protect the rights and property of absent countrymen, or those who although present may seek his protection. The consul to have the power of taking charge of the estates of any of his countrymen, who may die intestate, for the benefit of the heirs of the deceased.

10th Article

Five years,
the King
thinks, will
do better
than ten

That this treaty be in force for ten years, at the expiration of which period should either of the high contracting parties wish it to be at an end, one year's notice must be given, when it will cease to exist. Should this notice not be given, then the treaty will continue in full force.

11th Article

That this treaty when approved of will be

His Majesty
of Burmah
thinks that
this article
is not at all
required

ratified, and signed by the high contracting parties according to the custom of their respective countries. That the treaty when ratified will be exchanged within eighteen months or sooner if possible.

In the faith of this the plenipotentiaries sign and seal.

179

Letter addressed to Kastello, a Minister of the King of Sardinia by Don Paulo, Roman Catholic Priest.

The letter forwarded by Dabool Meeda a Minister to the King of Sardinia has been received by me, and after being translated into Burmese it was presented to the Ministers and Commander in Chief of the Monarch of the Rising Sun, who in reply stated that it was the desire of their most powerful monarch to be on terms of peace and friendship with all nations. Therefore the merchants of all nations shall be looked upon as his own subjects and shall receive the like protection. The merchants from the Kingdom of Sardinia also shall be treated in the same manner and their interests regarded. As regards the treaty, it is necessary only in cases where the one distrusts the other. The Ministers and Commander in Chief having thus replied, it will be well that a letter of friendship should be sent.

180

Amarapoora, 23 December, 1854.

My dear Major Phayre,

I had the pleasure of receiving your letter of the 16th ultimo on the 17th inst. That for the Kyouk Maw Maingyee, enclosed in the packet to my address, I delivered as soon as received.

I have spoken to the King about the grain, and have told him that the Commissariat would be willing to give 220 Rupees for 100 baskets wheat and 180 Rupees for gram, taking the whole of next year's crop. To this proposition he has not given me a distinct answer yet, but in the course of fifteen days or so I have little doubt but that I will be able to let you know whether you

can have it at that price or not. The reason why the King does not wish to lower the price at present is, I think, because Mr. Grant of Rangoon is on his way up to pay his respects to the Golden foot, and will arrive here in three or four days. He brings presents, I am told, for His Majesty to the value of five or six thousand rupees. One of the King's war boats accompanies him. Mr. Grant's object in coming up here is to get the monopoly of timber, cutch, wheat, and anything else he can manage to strike a bargain for. At least he says so in a petition, which arrived here four days ago. The timber and other articles he may take, but I do not think he can afford to give more for the wheat and gram than you offer.

His Majesty requested me some days ago, when I next wrote you, to say that Mong Bo would never get his old situation back again, but that a quiet clever man would be selected to govern Maloon. He did not mention who the person was he intended sending, but Mr. Camaratta thinks it will be the Myet tsen Woon Mong tso. Should this be the case, you may depend on that part of the frontier being kept quiet for the future, Mong tso being both a good and clever man. The King told me not to communicate this in his name, but to make it appear as if coming from myself. Mong Bo has not yet arrived, but the King says he will be here in a day or two.

The Burmeas in general pay little attention to the rebellion in China. The King sympathises with the native Chinees and wishes them success. The Tartar race he calls usurpers. The Chinees here say that the province of Yunan is not wholly in the hands of the rebels, somewhat less than one-third being still under the sway of the Emperor. The Burman envoy, whose return I mentioned in a previous letter, did not meet any of the rebel chiefs, his communication being only with the old authorities. The King hints there is no doubt of the final success of the insurgents, if they stick together, but he says that the last report from China mentions that they are divided into two parties, having no connection with one another and acknowledging different leaders. That when they have succeeded in driving the Tartars out, and have nothing more to fear from them, they will to a certainty quarrel amongst themselves.

Notwithstanding the disturbed state of China, and the pro-

vince of Yunan in particular, large caravans of mules are expected in as usual this year. Letters have been received by the Chinees merchants stating that some have arrived at Bamoo. The mules, that arrive from China direct, come by a different route; by them we generally get a good supply of hams, honey, walnuts, chestnuts, apples, and other small sundries. They also bring copper, hartal, spelter (Burmah thut), gold, silver, besides a variety of small articles used by the Burmeas. From this in return they take nothing but cotton; 50 viss is the usual load for one mule, packed in two bags of 25 viss each and slung over their backs like panniers. We have had no mules direct this year, but they are expected in January. Besides cotton the only thing exported to China is a little American drill and some British shirtings; but the trade is very trifling indeed. Broad cloth of Russian manufacture and of very good quality is brought from China in small quantities, and sold in the bazaar here; I suppose the Chinees must get it at the annual fairs held on their frontier.

A boat of the Dalla Woon's arrived here four days ago, by which we heard of your having left for Calcutta. This boat brought up the Dalla Woon's dispatches giving all the particulars of the different interviews he has had with you. Happening to be at the Palace when the Woongyees brought them in, I had an opportunity of hearing them read. They were very minute, and it took the Than daw tsene¹ at least two hours to get through them all. He gives the number of troops at the different stations in Pegu pretty correctly, also the number and names of the ships and steamers in the Irrawaddy. Mong Bathee also sent up a plan of the house you built for him, and a picture of the steamer and flat, with the war boat towing astern in which he was conveyed to Rangoon in [*sic*]. The Russian war was not forgotten, a correct account of the battle of Alma being amongst the other intelligence. The news of this battle has done some good here, as it shuts the mouths of those people, who have always been trying to persuade the King that the British were sure to get the worst of it. Mong Bathee spoke very highly of all that was done in Rangoon, and the King upon the whole was well pleased with the tenor of his dispatches.

His Majesty has been told about the 100 Maunds of wheat you intend presenting him with.

By this Burman dawk boat I send the long promised chess men; they are put up in a small tin box. The death of the man engaged in making them is the reason of the great delay. You will also see that some of the men are better finished than others, which is attributable to the same cause. A stand was made, but it was so coarsely done that I refused to receive it. The cost for ivory and workmanship is in all 51 Rupees. Should you have no use for this set of chessmen, I think it likely that Major Fytche would like to take them, as he wrote me for a set some time ago.

I have now to thank you for the payment of Cs. Rs. 298 to my Rangoon Agents, the price of sundry articles sent.

My letters still unacknowledged are of the 9th, 24th and 27th November, the 2nd and 9th instant. That of the 27th with the pagoda, I am afraid, will be a long time on the road down, as I have heard that the boat, by which it was sent, had met with an accident near Pagan Myow. In this letter I mentioned the death of the Tabayane Menginee's brother (Mong Gee) he was one of the thirty put to death in the Shan country. None of his other relatives have been molested in the least.

Everything up here is particularly quiet and dull at present. No further news from the Shan states, and not a word about a movement to the Karennee country, and remain,

Yours very sincerely,

THOMAS SPEARS.

¹ Thandawzin, i.e. 'receiver of the royal voice'. (*Vide* Letter No. 23, note 1.)

181

Private. Government House, Jan. 18th, 1855.

My dear Phayre,

I have to thank you for your letter of 10th inst. with Mr. Spears' enclosed. The Treaty with Sardinia would have been an absurdity if it ever had been concluded. In its present condition it is, of course, null. The course the King has taken appears to indicate that he will avoid all treaties with whatsoever nation, ourselves included. Our clever friend the Woondouk seems to have got himself into a scrape about their closing

request. If he really was without authority to make it, his act was a rash and riskful blunder for a Burman diplomatist.

The order admitting families to Thayet Myo was passed before I received your letter. Prome must be abandoned as a military station. I have been in correspondence with the C. in C. regarding it.

Any envoy connected with the so-called Sardinian Treaty may, of course, be allowed to pass. The assistance you wish for the Roman Catholic church will, no doubt, be given.

At home they have called for 2 Cavalry and 2 Infantry regiments (European). Of course it will be done.

Always yours sincerely,
DALHOUSIE.

182

Rangoon, January 12th, 1855.

My Lord,

Since I wrote by the Sesostri nothing particular has occurred here. The envoys will leave in four days more. I am only waiting for the arrival of Tenasserim, and then I purpose leaving for Prome and going from thence to Toungoo.

Major Allan is here having come down sick from Prome. He purposes, however, returning immediately and resuming his survey of the frontier. I hope his health will not be seriously impaired. From reports I have from Mr. O'Riley, I think it doubtful whether it will be expedient for Major Allan to follow the frontier line for more than about ten miles east of the boundary pillar on the Sitang river. The whole country is inhabited there by 'wild' or independent tribes of Karens,¹ and for the present I incline to think they had better be left to themselves. They never owned allegiance to the Burmese. I am, My Lord,

with much respect your obedient servant,

A. P. PHAYRE.

¹ O'Riley, the Assistant-Commissioner at Toungoo, had been on a tour of inquiry into the condition of these trans-Sitang 'Kayin Yaings' or 'wild Karens', as the Burmese called them. He had proposed establishing as British Agent among them a Karen Christian, who had been educated by the American Baptist Mission. The Government of

India accorded sanction to the proposal on the understanding that 'the authority conferred on the Agent is not used for purposes connected with his objects as a teacher'. His duties were to be strictly confined to checking feuds, preventing a traffic in slaves, and keeping the Assistant-Commissioner at Toungoo informed of all interesting occurrences. (*I.S.P.*, Cons. 26 Jan. 1855, Nos. 46-50.)

183

Private. Government House, Jan. 30th, 1855.

My dear Phayre,

It is doubtful when this letter will reach you, if indeed it ever reach you, in the wide tour¹ you are about to make. Fortunately there is nothing requiring notice. Your view as to the Eastern frontier appears to be quite sound and judicious. I would not meddle with the Karens at all, if possible. They are very well as they are, and cannot be made better: they may be made worse.

Very soon I proceed to the Neilgherries. Our correspondence, therefore, must be slower; but I hope you will be so good as to continue it. Believe me to be,

Yours sincerely,

DALHOUSIE.

¹ Of the frontier from Myede to Toungoo.

184

Rangoon, January 25th, 1855.

My Lord,

I beg to enclose copies of letters from Mr. Spears dated the 29th December and 6th January last.

Everything is quiet at Ava, and the King has already commenced preparing a house for the envoy he anticipates will be sent by your Lordship.¹

Since my return here the whole of the accounts of the Province for the year ending 30th April 1854 have been rendered. The amount is, deducting what will have to be remitted, not much under 12 lacs of rupees. This includes customs and everything. The accounts have been long delayed, but this shall not occur

again. This year (ending April 30th, 1855) I fully expect we shall have a total revenue of Rs.16 lacs at the very least.

I have been delayed here beyond the time I anticipated, in consequence of a slight accident to the Indus, in which steamer I was to have gone. Major Allan who came down here sick, returns with me in a day or two to Meeaday, and we then go across together from there to Toungoo.

The King, it appears, refuses to sell wheat and gram at a lower rate than last year; and as he does so quite in the spirit of a haggling trader, I think, if your Lordship approves, it will be better to show we are not dependent upon him, and refuse to give a higher price than what has been offered—namely 220 Rs. 100 baskets for wheat, and 180 Rs. for gram.

26th.

I have received by Sesostri your Lordship's letter of the 18th inst.

Mr. Login has arrived by Sesostri and proceeds now with me to Henzadah, to commence at once on the survey of the opening into the Bassein river. I am, My Lord,

with much respect your obedient servant,

A. P. PHAYRE.

¹ At the official dinner party to welcome the Burmese Mission to Calcutta, the Governor-General had announced his intention of sending Phayre at the head of a return mission with presents to Amarapoorā.

185

Amirapoorā, 29th December, 1854.

My dear Major Phayre,

I had last the pleasure of writing you on the 23d instant by the Burman dawk. To-day I have heard that a boat starts for Rangoon direct, and although I have little to communicate, I do not like to let an opportunity pass without giving you a few lines.

Mr. Grant arrived here on the evening of the 24th, and the next day the King sent people to his boat, to convey him to a house previously prepared for him. On the 25th he was taken to the Maengee's houses; on the 26th to the King's brother, and on the 27th His Majesty was graciously pleased to receive him. Mr. Grant is particularly well pleased with the reception he has

met with here, and will, I think, carry away with him a favourable impression of the King and his brother. He was received in that part of the Palace called the [Myenan] or earthen,¹ carpets being spread for all present. Being the first interview the King did not remain long out, and spoke little, confining himself to the usual questions put by Burmans on such occasions. A Mr. McAlder was interpreter, and through him Grant was asked where he was born, his age, who his father was, how many brothers and sisters he had, their profession and so on. Business was not alluded to, but to-day Mr. Grant goes to the Palace again, when I suppose that which both parties are most anxious about, namely, making a good bargain, will form the principal part of their conversation. Mr. Grant[']s presents to His Majesty consisted of two large mirrors, two large sized musical boxes, some otto of roses and a few more sundries to the value in all of about three thousand rupees. The presents he made to the Prince and Ministers might be about fifteen hundred rupees more.

A dark gentleman, a Mr. Phillips, formerly a clerk with Captain Ardagh is living at present with Father Abbona. He has been commissioned (by the Commissariat, I think) to purchase timber here for building purposes at Thayet Myow, the price he has to pay being the same I mentioned to you some time ago, namely 15 Ticals yewtnee, for a rough log measuring 12 cubits in length by four in girth.

Everything is quiet here. A house for the British envoy, in a good situation to the southward of the town, is to be commenced with at once. The plan of it is already drawn. And I remain,

Yours sincerely,

THOMAS SPEARS.

¹ That part of the Palace called the earthen, i.e. the Myenan, from its earthen floor.

186

Amorapoor, 2d January, 1855.

My dear Major Phayre,

I avail myself of a boat of Mr. Grant's going to Rangoon to write you a few lines. Allow me to wish you a good New Year, and many happy returns of the season.

Since writing you on the 29th, a Mr. Owen a timber merchant has arrived from Prome. He has brought a good supply of rupees with him, and has already bargained to take 20,000 ticals worth of timber at the old price (15 Y). There is some dispute about the exchange, Mr. Owen wishing to pay at the rate of 130 Rs. a hundred ticals, and the King's people to take them by weight, that is 140 rupees a viss of yewtnée. To-day he has paid 5,000 rupees to account. This timber, I believe, is intended for the use of Government.

Mr. Grant is getting on famously, he is to take all the timber on the *Toungoo* frontier at 15 Yewtnée. He is to get two steam boats for His Majesty, one from Calcutta, and the other from England. The King also agrees to take over 250 cases of Europe piece goods in part payment of the timber. Mr. Grant will remain here some ten days longer, when he will leave a man of his here, and return to Rangoon. The King is obstinate, and will not agree to let the Commissariat have the grain at the prices proposed by you; he wants the old price namely 200 and 250.¹ The only way to bring the price down is to get all your supplies from Bengal this year. The crop there, I am given to understand, has been particularly good this season.

Two days ago a native Chinesees [*sic*] Christian, with letters for Father Abbona from a French Catholic priest residing in the city of Tale fow, in the province of Yunnan, arrived here. He came by the way of Bomaw which, he says, is only fifteen days journey from that city. *Ta le fow* is still in the hands of the Emperor, as well as all the country lying between it and the Burman frontier. The country, through which this man passed in coming to Bomaw, he represents to be settled and quiet, with the exception of that part lying between the Burman and Chinesees territories, a hilly tract inhabited by *Kacheens*, in passing through which, he and his fellow travellers, about one hundred in all, were robbed of all they had. The caravans in passing through this intermediate territory generally agree to pay so much a mule to the chiefs of the hill tribes, and I believe that it is some dispute about this *blackmail*, that has rendered the roads dangerous at present.

Father Abbona tells me that this is the first communication he has ever had from the mission at *Ta le fow*. It consists of six

European and a number of native priests. The Christian population there is also represented to be something considerable. The disturbed state of the country, and the very great difficulty, amounting almost to an impossibility, of getting letters forwarded on to Canton, is the reason of their trying to open a communication in this quarter. As the messenger also brought a good sized packet addressed to the Catholic Herald, Calcutta, I suppose you will see something more of this matter in that paper.

The Kyouk Maw Maengee left ten days ago for a place above Kyouk Myoung for the purpose of repairing a large tank there; when he returns, the *Mya doun*g Woongee goes to a place a little below Ava, where, it seems, there is a large tank out of repairs. All the Woongees and Atween Woons have each got a task of the same kind, which they must get through this cold season. Rice is very plentiful just now. Pegu cargo rice can be had in the boat for 80² a hundred baskets, but I have no doubt that it will be much dearer in the course of a few months.

The Prince, in whose hands the coal mines are at present, does not think that the prices mentioned by you, 14 and 20,³ would pay, the boat hire being very high. Perhaps something may be done at 20 for Prome, and 26 for Rangoon. Mr. Owen, the timber man, has been making inquiries on the subject, I have been told.

Every two or three days I make a point of seeing the King and Prince, and am always well received by them. Our last dawik boat brought up no papers, but I trust the next, which will be here in the course of eight days, will be more fortunate, and by it I hope to hear of the fall of Sebastapool, and I remain,

Yours very sincerely,

THOMAS SPEARS.

¹ i.e. Rs. 250 for wheat and Rs. 200 for gram pr. 100 baskets.

² Ticals presumably.

³ ? Ticals (or rupees) per maund.

187

Amirapoora, 6th January, 1854.

My dear Major Phayre,

Our Burman dawik boat leaves today, and although I have got little interesting to communicate, as a matter of course I write by it.

The Kyouk Maw Woongee returned from Kyouk Myoung three days ago, having given directions for the finishing of his tank. The Mya doung Woongee leaves tomorrow for a place a little below old Ava to perform a similar task.

Mr. Grant made his Kodaw¹ to the King and Prince yesterday, presenting both of them with very handsome gold watches and chains. He received in return from the King a ruby ring, gold cup, a pony and two good putsoes. From the Prince he got a gold sword and dagger, two putsoes, and a number of Shan boxes. He has also got permission from the King to import 250 cases of piece goods duty free, and this, where the duty charged is ten per cent, will amount to some 15,000 ticals, so that Mr. Grant on the whole will make a rather good thing of coming up here.

Some days ago we made a picknic party out to Oung ben lae, where we passed the day very pleasantly. This is the place where the Christian prisoners were confined during the war. The prison-that-was is in a very delapidated state now. The ground about Oung ben lae is full of saltpetre; we saw a number of people engaged there in the manufacture of it. Some of the specimens shown us were really very good, and would bear comparison with the best made in Bengal. It has never been the custom to allow this article to be exported, and consequently it is only made on Government account.² Some common salt is also manufactured there for the use of the villagers, but not in sufficient quantity to make it an article of import.

I had a letter a few days ago from Captain Dickens of the Prome Commissariat. He mentions the 100 maunds of wheat you are going to present the King with; it will, I am afraid, be rather too late for this season, the wheat here being now all in the ground, and the plant some seven or eight inches high. To-day I will write Captain Dickens, and let him know that the King refuses to sell the grain at 180 and 220. I hope that this year you will get all your supplies from Bengal.

In expectation of a British envoy coming up here the King has given orders to have a good house prepared for him, the building of which will commence immediately. The envoy, when he does come, will be received with all honour, and every respect, I am certain, will be paid him.

I had last the pleasure of writing you on the 29th December and 2d instant—and trusting you have arrived safely in Rangoon again, I am,

yours sincerely,

THOMAS SPEARS.

¹ *Kodaw*, literally 'beg pardon', here means 'farewell obeisance'.

² On this point *vide* Hall, *Early English Intercourse with Burma*, pp. 165, 177, 229–30.

188

Private. Government House, Feb. 6th, 1855.

My dear Phayre,

I write in the hurry of preparing for departure,¹ but I wish to thank you for your last letter of 25th Jan. and for the enclosures from Mr. Spears. The tidings from Ava continue to be good—and I hope the report of the Envoys, when they return, will not tend to diminish the good feeling there, notwithstanding that they do not bring back Pegu in their wallet.

The revenue too of the province is as good as any reasonable man could expect it to be. I would hold out against the King's price for wheat and gram and take none this year, unless he gives way.

By this mail I have written to General Steel about the removal of the 2nd. Europeans to Moulmein, on which I spoke to you, when you were here. May all go well and peacefully with you.

Always yours sincerely,

DALHOUSIE.

¹ For the Nilgiri Hills.

189

Thabulla, 3 Marches East from Meeaday, February 15th, 1855.

My Lord,

I am now on my way across to Toungoo, and have arrived at the post, which has been established 26 miles east of Meeaday. The country is for the most part covered with jungal. There were formerly villages scattered on favourable spots over this tract as

far as the ridge of mountains, which lies midway between the Irrawaddy and the Sitang. These have all been driven off beyond the boundary pillars by Mounng Bo, the late Myothoogyee of Meeaday. I am now with Major Allan about to establish the police posts on the frontier sanctioned by Government, and when that has been done, I hope to get the people back. At present they are afraid to come, lest they should be molested on the way.

Major Allan is now on his way to the Eastern side of the Sitang river. We shall have about 12 more marches before we reach the river.

The country we have hitherto marched through produces nothing but a small quantity of teak and the substance called *cutch*, procured by boiling the wood of a tree. At this time of the year the country is quite dry; indeed it is frequently difficult to find water. It is, however, very healthy.

I have not yet heard of the progress of the Burmese envoys beyond a place called Men Rawa which is about 40 miles beyond our frontier. When your Lordship sends a mission with a letter and presents to the King, I would venture to suggest that a company of Europeans might go as the escort. They could be accommodated with ease in a flat, and would be sufficient without any Native Infantry. Mr. Oldham the geologist is now employed on the Tenasserim coast, and it would, no doubt, be desirable that he should go up the Irrawaddy, and even visit the coal fields beyond Ava, if possible. We have some coal near Thayet Myo also, which I should like him to inspect before hand, when he can be spared from Tenasserim. I have understood that two or three Arab horses, bay colour without white feet, would be very acceptable presents to the King of Ava.

This letter will hardly find your Lordship in Calcutta. I am, with much respect, My Lord,

your obedient servant,

A. P. PHAYRE.

STATEMENT OF COLLECTIONS AT THE RANGOON CUSTOM HOUSE DURING THE PAST SIX MONTHS

Viz: From the 1st May to the 31st October 1854.

No.	Month.	Amount of Tonnage Duty.	Amount of Import Duty.	Amount of Export Duty.	Duty on Salt @ 6 As. per. Md.	Nett proceeds of confiscated goods.	Sale of two canoes.	Amount of Salaries not drawn.	TOTAL.	REMARKS.
1	May	C. Rs. a. p. 430 0 0	C. Rs. a. p. 9,791 13 9½	C. Rs. a. p. 860 13 4½	C. Rs. a. p. 352 1 6½	C. Rs. a. p. 156 4 3	C. Rs. a. p.	C. Rs. a. p.	C. Rs. a. p. 11,591 0 11½	Average amount of Receipts per month cos. Rs. 13,054 0 0
2	June	641 0 0	5,764 5 2	1,415 11 8½	78 11 4½	115 12 6	.. .. .	.. .. .	8,015 8 9½	
3	July	428 8 0	21,773 5 10½	710 10 0½	.. .. .	315 2 6	.. .. .	.. .. .	23,227 10 4½	
4	Aug.	671 0 0	11,185 7 0½	1,253 10 7½	108 8 10	1,476 9 6	67 2 5	.. .. .	14,762 6 5	
5	Sept.	326 0 0	5,628 7 2	645 9 2½	1,324 7 9	468 12 0	.. .. .	.. .. .	8,393 4 1½	
6	Oct.	1,065 4 0	10,084 13 11½	797 2 7½	268 13 1½	.. .. .	.. .. .	118 0 0	12,334 1 8½	
GRAND TOTAL		3,561 12 0	64,228 4 11½	5,683 9 7	2,132 10 8	2,532 8 9	67 2 5	118 0 0	78,325 0 4½	

ABSTRACT

Tonnage Duty	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	3,561 12 0
Import	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	64,228 4 11½
Export	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	5,683 9 7
Imported Salt	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	2,132 10 8
Proceeds of confiscated goods	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	2,532 8 9
Sale of two canoes	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	67 2 5
Amount of salaries not drawn	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	118 0 0
								78,324 0 4½
Total Cos. Rupees								78,324 0 4½

Rangoon Custom House,
The 31st October 1854.

R. S. EDWARDS
Collector of Customs.

190

Camp at Watteegaum, District of Prome, April 2d 1855.

My Lord,

I had the pleasure to receive your Lordship's letters of January 30th and February 6th only three days ago. I marched from Meeaday across the country to the Toungoo district, which from the difficulty of the road took much longer than I anticipated. I then went up to the frontier and marched from that down to the city of Toungoo. I remained one week there and then came back across the hills by a different road to that I went. I am now on my way to Prome from which this place is 15 miles distant. I came here a little out of my way as it was one of the places where the Madras troops met with a serious defeat last war.

The district of Toungoo is very thinly populated and will require to be carefully nursed. The people are about the most loyal to us of any I have seen, unless it be those of Mendoon. I hope before long to submit my report on the district. The cantonment buildings are going on as fast as material can be procured. The Burmese officer on the border has agreed to sell some 3 or 4000 logs of teak timber. It is a very healthy place and the new cantonment is an excellent site. The old town in the rains is a mass of swamp. I have now travelled over a very considerable extent of country and the quiet is profound. I have with me only 1 Havildar and 12 Sepoys, and but that I was perswaded to take them, I would have come across without one to show how perfectly the country has settled down. The people, whether Burmese, Karens or other tribes, hail with satisfaction the British rule, now that they feel secure that they will not be *given up*. But the country has suffered and requires repose. I have everywhere inquired minutely into the circumstances of the people. A short distance from the Irrawaddy the population becomes very scanty. They live by clearing small spots in the forest and raising rice, cotton and other products therein. But the clearing is a fresh one each year. With a people in such a rude state it is necessary to be very gentle in the matter of taxation. I feel very certain, however, that in a few years more they will furnish a considerable quantity of cotton

of an excellent quality and silk also. I am sending to Calcutta specimens of these with all requisite particulars.

To show that our trade upwards has not diminished I beg to enclose a copy of the statement of duties levied in February. In January the amount was larger still, being Rs. 25,000, but I have not the statement by me to send.

I now come to speak of a matter that has disturbed me considerably. On my march from Meeaday in company with Major Allan across the hills we halted at a large Karen village, at the foot of the high range. This village is about 10 to 12 miles within our border.¹ It had not been visited before. The people were friendly and were constantly at our tents. I gave the head man the usual document constituting him chief of his tribe. There were doubts and misgivings whether these people would not be molested from across the border on account of our visit, but I on the whole considered the Burmese would not be so reckless and insolent as to do so. I am sorry to say I was mistaken. Very soon after I had left, these Karens and the few Burmese, who also lived in the village, received notice from one Shwé Bé, a hired ruffian of the Myothoogyee's across the border, that they must leave the British territory; and as they were unwilling to do so, an armed party came to drive them off! I have not yet full particulars, but they sent for assistance to our post at Thabulla,² got it and were rescued, but I believe an Irregular Horseman of the 8th was shot. I really, My Lord, feel more exasperated than I perhaps ought to be, but I think it not too much to propose as follows:

1st. Your Lordship's return letter, presents, &c. to be withheld until full satisfaction be given for this outrage.

2nd. I would almost recommend now that the whole question of the population of Meeaday amounting to some 10,000 or 15,000 souls, having been driven off early in 1854 by the same parties, be opened up. If so, a British officer should be deputed to go among them and bring back all who desire to come (*all* do, no doubt). By that time the frontier guards will all be ready and they can be effectually protected.

3rd. Shwé Bé, the hired ruffian, to be removed and not allowed on the frontier; and if Mounng Bo the Myothoogyee was at the time on the frontier his removal to be insisted upon also. (Mr.

Spears in his letter, which I enclose, states he was up at Ava answering to a complaint I sent up against him last August about another attack his people made).³ I shall do nothing beyond writing to the chief Woongyee as soon as I reach Prome, protesting against these outrages but containing no threats—at the same time requesting Mr. Spears to inform his Majesty (who professed to be so anxious to see me at a private interview) that a friendly embassy is totally out of the question, until full reparation has been made for this atrocious attack. I hope your Lordship will approve of all this. I have not yet received the depositions of the people driven off so that the case is not ready to send up—but of the general truth of what I have above stated I have no doubt.⁴

Regarding the wheat, I was surprised to find the Commissariat officer at Prome anxious *now* to pay the King his price. If I find on my return that he still thinks it will be *advantageous* to pay the rate demanded, I hope I may be allowed to give in; but I have very strong doubts of the policy of doing so.

Your Lordship will notice that mention is made in one of Mr. Spears' letters of the model pagoda long ago promised. It has not yet actually come to my hand, though I believe it is in Prome. I shall transmit it to your Lordship, and may I make some return present as a microscope or some such toy?

One point remains to be noticed. In Mr. Spears' letter of January 13th he mentions that the King says the Karen-nee country lies within his boundary. This is a mistake. The Karen-nee country lies on the Salween river about the latitude of *Toungoo*. The northern extremity of it may *possibly* go beyond our Meeaday line. I have long been pursuing inquiries regarding what is going on in Karen-nee, and when at *Toungoo* sent across a man to inquire whether the Burmese were, as stated, interfering in that country. The reply has not yet reached me. I shall address an official letter to the Government detailing the whole state of matters as regards Karen-nee, for it will be necessary to disabuse the King's mind of the notion he has that the country is his. Perhaps it will be advisable for Major Allan to go up the Salween river from Maulmain and erect a pillar on the bank there, on the line of six miles N. of Meeaday latitude, to show that we do not allow the Burmese to interfere with any tribes

below that mark, although we leave those tribes to themselves as much as possible.

I enclose Mr. Spears' letters in original of the following dates: January 13th and 21st 1855, February 4th, 9th and 20th, March 6th and 17th. As I have not the means now of having these copied, I respectfully request that they may be returned to me.

I hope that your Lordship is deriving benefit from the change of air to the hills, and remain,

with much respect your faithful and obedient servant,

A. P. PHAYRE.

¹ In his official letter he calls it Thadoot Koon or Nga Thaway Tay.

² Eighteen miles east of Myede.

³ *Vide* Letter No. 150, last paragraph.

⁴ For Dalhousie's reply, *vide* Letters Nos. 198, 200.

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Amorapoorra, 13th January 1855.

My dear Major Phayre,

The Burman dawk boat arrived yesterday taking ten days to do the distance between this and Prome. By it we had Calcutta papers up to the 23d November; those parts relative to the war with Russia I had translated for His Majesty's perusal. I trust the next boat will announce the fall of Sebastopol.

When I was at the Palace this morning, I heard something about the disturbances in the Karennie country for the first time. Aman from *Yaemarthen* (Yamethin) arrived yesterday with a letter for Mr. Cammaretta, which was read at the Palace in my presence. It mentions that the Karennees are divided into two parties at war with each other. That one of the parties had sent people to Toungoo to beg assistance from the British; that the officer in charge there had refused to send men, but made the deputation a present of gunpowder and other warlike articles. I am not quite certain about the locality of Karennee country, but the King says that it lies within his boundary line, and expressed himself displeased that the British should furnish any of his dependencies with munitions of war. No Burman forces have left this for the Karennee country, and will not, I believe, so long as the people there confine themselves to their own territory, and do not

receive assistance from the British. In the case of any Burmans being sent, it will not be from the capital, but from the forces stationed at Monae; in which case we may not hear of the expedition until some time after they have left. In the meantime I have assured the King that I have little doubt, but that the letter received by Mr. Camaretta misstates and exaggerates the facts of the case greatly. In my next I hope to be able to give a more satisfactory account of this matter. My opinion is that the King will not interfere at all; but this depends on the nature of the news we may afterwards receive.

The King today told me that he was going to send people to Assam for the purpose of bringing away some relations of one of his Queens (a member of the late royal family of that country), who still remain there, and asked me if I thought the British Government would offer any opposition to his doing so. My answer was, that if the people were willing to come, I really could not see what objections our Government could make to their leaving that country; but that I did not know much about the matter, and that as a British envoy would most likely be here before many months, it would perhaps be better to wait until then.

Today I was at the Prince's house, and amongst other things he told me that a large hill of sulphur had been found in the Shan country. That this has been told the Prince, is likely to be true, but that such a hill is in existence, I may be allowed to doubt. It is most likely that some person has seen something the colour of sulphur, and so the origin of this story.

Timber continues to arrive in large quantities from the Chendween river and also from above Amorapoor. Mr. Owen has purchased 1000 pieces of the *Chendween* timber, and leaves tomorrow to take possession of it. He has seen the King and Prince, and received putsoes from both of them. Mr. Owen has been obliged to pay 140 rupees for the viss of yewtnee.

I now write by a merchant boat; in a few days more I will do myself the pleasure of again addressing you by the dawk boat.

Everything quiet here and going on in the usual manner.

Yours sincerely,

THOMAS SPEARS.

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Amorapoorra, 21st January, 1855.

My dear Major Phayre,

On the 13th instant under cover to Captn. Sparks, I did myself the pleasure of writing you by a merchant boat. Mong Bo, Governor of Maloon, the man who has been giving so much trouble on the frontier, arrived here six days ago. I saw him the other day at the Kyouk Maw Woongee's house, where I had some talk with him, and certainly from his appearance and conversation I would not have supposed him to be a man of the bad character he has by his acts proved himself to be. But appearances are sometimes deceitful. Within the last three days numerous petitions have been received from Maloon and other places, formerly under his charge, accusing him of having levied, a short time before he left for this, large sums of money on false pretences. Although Mong Bo is a man of sixty, he does not look much above fifty and upon the whole has a rather prepossessing appearance.

In my letter of the 2d instant I mentioned that a Chinese Christian had arrived with letters from Tale-fou; he will return in about ten days hence, the King paying all his expenses as far as the Chinese frontier. The letter he takes with him for the mission there has been translated and shewn to the King. It announces that His Majesty has been graciously pleased to allow any communications to pass through his dominions, and that the priests themselves may come and go with perfect liberty, whenever they think proper. In future it is intended that this mission will be supplied with funds through Burmah via Bomaw, this route even in peaceable times begin much safer and nearer than that by the way of Canton. Father Abbona tells me that he is making arrangements for leaving Burmah, his intention being to go home, if he can possibly manage it, before the south west monsoon sets in. This I do not think he will be able to do, as the King does not wish to part with him until the expected British envoy arrives. The house for the envoy is getting on rapidly, the posts being now very nearly all up. It is well situated in a sort of garden with a number of trees round about it, its only fault being that it is at rather too great a distance from the Palace. The ground

is high, the water, even when the river is at its greatest height, never covering it. The water in the river is very low just now, but it will be lower in February—it does not generally begin to rise before the middle or end of March. A steamer drawing even only three or four feet would find great difficulty in coming up the river for the next three months. After that it would, comparatively speaking, be a very easy matter.

You will remember I wrote you a long time ago that the King had sent a number of *ex* governors, paenens, etc. etc. who had formerly held office in Pegu, to reside in old Ava, and that he had made them a liberal allowance for the support of themselves and followers. Mong Myet toon and the most of those people are still there, but Mr. Camaretta told me yesterday that some of them had stolen away, he thinks for the lower provinces, where it is not at all unlikely they may try to get up disturbances in the King's name. Mr. Camaretta, being an officer of the King's and zealous in his master's interests, desires me to tell you that if such should turn out to be the case you must not believe what they say, as he knows well that so far from the King wishing to create disturbances in Pegu, he would do everything that lay in his power to prevent a state of things so undesirable. He therefore trusts that should, unfortunately, disturbances take place in your province, you will not blame the King, merely because some bad men may, without authority, make use of his name.

Rice still continues very abundant. Pegu cargo can be had at from 80 to 90 ticals yewtnnee per hundred baskets.

We will have a fair average crop of cotton this year. The advices from China being of an encouraging kind, prices have gone up to 50 ticals yewtnnee a 100 viss, so that the royal profit this year will amount to a considerable item. The Chinese merchants are prepared to pay into the Royal Treasury seven lacs of ticals yewtnnee next month.

By this time I trust you have arrived in Rangoon all the better of your trip to Calcutta. I have now the pleasure of addressing you by the Burman dawk boat.

And remain, yours very sincerely,
THOMAS SPEARS.

193

Amorapoora, 4th February, 1855.

My dear Major Phayre,

By the Burman dawk boat I had the pleasure of receiving yours of the 5th January on the 31st. The two letters for the Loot daw were also duly received and delivered. Boats for the envoys left the following day. The *Nan Madaw* woon did not give any account of his mission to Calcutta, but merely mentioned in a general way his satisfaction at the way he was treated there, reserving particulars until his arrival here.

We have had no accounts of any disturbances on the frontier during your absence. Mong Bo has lost his situation, and the King the other day told me that he intended to make the Kala Woon, Makertish, governor of Maloon on his return; should he do so, there is every prospect of that part of the frontier being kept quiet for the future.

I am happy to hear that you are coming up, and have no doubt but that you will be cordially received, and have every attention paid you. The house for the British envoy is situated about a mile to the southward of Amorapoora, the *Toungla mau aen* lying between it and the town. However, you will have no difficulty in crossing it as there are several bridges. His Majesty some six days ago told me and Mr. Camaretta to go and take a look at the house and report what progress had been made; also to point out to the workmen where windows would be required.

Mongthouy Woung, the old Ka La woon took down the pagoda the King made you a present of. From some carelessness on his part it was detained here a much longer time than it ought to have been, but I suppose it must be in Rangoon by this time at least. Shouy Mounng must have been detained on the road looking after the King's cutch.

I shall have much pleasure in procuring for you a *Maha Yadza waene*.¹ Father Abbona has received an order for a copy of the same work from Captain Ardagh.

A Mr. Sarkees Manook leaves this for Calcutta in a few days with about thirty thousand rupees' worth of lead belonging to the King. You will remember he was interpreter for the Woon-gee when he was at Prome. I cannot say much in favor of

Mr. Manook; he has been principally employed here in translating news papers for the King and Prince, and it is no fault of his if the Burmans do not believe that the power of the British is drawing to a close. We can do very well without him here.

The Prince has been unwell for the last three or four days, and been obliged to keep his house. Yesterday the King paid him a visit and made him a present of 10,000 ticals. There is nothing seriously the matter with him.

From time to time Mr. Camaretta continues to receive letters from his people stationed at Yaemaethen, but they do not mention anything more about the state of affairs in the Karanee country. In my letter of the 13th ultimo I have given you all the information I am in possession of on that subject.

The Chinese Christian has returned to Talafou. He went up the river in a merchant boat. The King made him a present of one hundred ticals, besides which there was a subscription got up here, by which he got about as much more.

I have not been able to make any arrangement for purchasing coals, the prices asked by the King being too exorbitant. He wants 100 ticals for 100 baskets, or 5000 viss, to be delivered on that part of the river side situated nearest to the mines. When you come up here yourself, I think it is likely you may be able to do something.

We have not a single word of news from the Shan country; the states there appear to be all settled and quiet. The same remark may be made of all the territory still under the King's rule. Our latest Calcutta papers were up to the 28th December.

Enclosed is my salary bill for the months of October, November and December; also a bill for dawk boat charges incurred in that period. Kindly pay the amount to Messrs. Johnston, Barlas and Co. Rangoon.

And I remain, &c.,
THOMAS SPEARS.

¹ *Maha Yazawin*, the Great Chronicle, one of the best known Burmese Chronicles; it was composed by Maung Kala early in the eighteenth century. For a note on the various Burmese Chronicles, *vide* Professor Pe Maung Tin's Introduction to Tin and Luce's *The Glass Palace Chronicle of the Kings of Burma* (Oxford, 1923).

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Amorapoora, 9th February, 1855.

My dear Major Phayre,

Since writing on the 4th by the Burman dawk boat nothing of the slightest importance has taken place here. The Prince still keeps his house but is gradually getting better.

Father Abbona says that as you are coming up in June, he will not leave Amorapoora until then, as he would like much to meet you here. The *Tabayene* [Tabayin] priest¹ has been here for some days past. This is the first time I have seen him since my arrival; it is now more than twenty years since he came to the country. He reports this year's rice crop to be very defective in the *Tabayene* district, and all the country there about, from the want of rain at the end of the year. At one time the crops there promised to be very abundant. On the east side of the river and towards Yaemaethen they have had fair average crops. Cleaned rice can be had in the bazar for $1\frac{1}{4}$ ticals a basket.

By a merchant boat that arrived yesterday we have heard of the envoys having reached Maguay; so that I suppose that by tomorrow or next day we may have them here. Every person from the King downwards is anxious to hear the result of the mission.

I have not a word of news to tell you. The country appears to prosper even although almost all the produce is monopolised by the King. All get enough to eat, and we hear of few robberies.

Yesterday the Thakane Mangee (Mong Shong tha) died in his 79 year. He was governor of Rangoon about forty years ago, and Woongee in Tarawaddie's reign. It was only from his being past service that the present King did not give him a situation.

When the envoys arrive here, I think I will have something to write about, which is more than I have at present, so pray excuse me,

And I remain, &c.,

THOMAS SPEARS.

P.S. I have just this moment heard that the Kalawoon Maker-tish has arrived; he gave the Nanma daw woon the slip, and

came up in a fast boat to have the first word with the King. The other envoys are not expected up for the next two days. T.S.

¹ i.e. Roman Catholic Missionary from Tabayin.

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Amorapoorra, 20th February 1855.

My dear Major Phayre,

By a merchant boat I had the pleasure of writing you on the 9th. On the afternoon of the same day the Ka La Woon arrived. The Dalla Woon did not come in until five days after. Makertish has been appointed Governor of Maloon, and will have charge of that part of the frontier in future. He leaves this in five or six days. There is some talk of Mong Bo going down to join him two months hence, but even in that case he will be under Makertish, and could do little harm. However, I trust he will not be sent at all.

The King gave Mong Bathee and the other envoys long private audiences, one at a time. What they have communicated has not become public, but I suppose, as the King is in a good humour, their reports must have been satisfactory. All the presents they received in Calcutta were shown to his Majesty, who was graciously pleased to allow them to retain the whole. The portraits of the envoys, you had taken for them, quite took the King's fancy, particularly that of Mong Bathee, which, he said, was a striking likeness, only a *little too dark*. When the process, by which these portraits were obtained, was explained to the King, he said that he could not believe it possible until he saw it done with his own eyes, and then asked me to write you to try and get an instrument of the same kind for him. He says he will pay whatever it will cost.

Ten days ago I had a letter from Captain Dickens, stating that he had applied for permission to enter into a contract for this year's wheat and gram at the prices paid for last year's crop, and that he had no doubt but that he would be allowed to do so. This I have communicated to the King, who is quite willing to dispose of the whole crop on those terms. By this dawk boat I have written Captain Dickens telling him so, and giving every

information I can on the subject. Both wheat and gram may be expected in much larger quantities this year than last. The King speaks of about a lac of baskets each, but this I look upon as a very exaggerated estimate; 20,000 baskets of the former, and about 30,000 of the latter will be the outside, I think. But in this I may be mistaken, as a considerable quantity is grown down the river, and up the *Chendween*, of which I have no means of forming a correct estimate.

The wheat will be got in much sooner this year than last as it is now nearly ripe. The greater portion of the crop should be in Meeaday before the rains set in. This I believe I can get done, if Captain Dickens' letter confirming the contract arrives in time.

On the 12th of the *Latsan*, six days hence, the yearly poy (pwe) held on the Shouy Ga Young pagoda takes place. Nearly half the inhabitants of Amorapoora will be there, besides country people and Shans in great numbers. The mother of the deposed King (Mother-in-law of his present Majesty) is also going. Shouy Ga Young is situated about 20 miles south-east of Amorapoora, I am told, on the banks of the Myet Gnay, a river which joins the Erawaddy at old Ava. As I am going to Shouy Ga Young myself, I will be able to tell you more about it by and by. Not caring much about those shows I never thought of going before, and would not now, if the King had not the other day very kindly offered me elephants for the trip. Mr. Camaretta and F. Abbona are to be of the party; we intend starting a day before the fair so as to keep as much out of the crowd as possible, and expect to be away four days.

The last Burman dawk boat arrived on the 16th instant. By it we had Calcutta papers up to the 11th ultimo. Captain Ardagh in his letter to me mentions the dispersion of Mong Goung Gee's party, the capture of two of his elephants, and some of his people.¹ I have told the King about this, whose only remark was: 'Moung Goung Gee is only a robber. I am glad to hear the English have been able to turn him out at last; they will be able to keep the Irrawaddy district quieter now.' Nothing more was said on the subject.

A number of people are engaged in repairing the walls of the town. They are to be all plastered, a useless expense that will

cost the King some two or three lacs of ticals, and will not, I think, add much to the beauty of the city.

A Mr. Lewis in Mr. Grant's employment is here purchasing and rafting timber. They have got together about 2500 logs, mostly twelve cubic length, the prices paid the same as I advised you of before. Part of this timber will leave in a few days.

The merchants coming from Rangoon complain greatly of the delay and inconvenience experienced at Thyetmyow in the way they search the piece goods chests in passing that station. A boat load of goods coming to my consignment the other day had every case opened, and the consequence was that 26 pieces of goods were short on the boat's arrival here. Whether the boat men stole them, or the people at Thyet Myow, is, of course, more than I can tell. Could it not be possibly arranged that the boat and piece goods cases be examined in Rangoon, after which the collector might give a certificate or pass, stating the contents of the packages, and that they contained nothing contraband. This would be a great boon. The cases could be sealed, if necessary.

I am, &c.,

T. SPEARS.

¹ Early in the year a systematic attempt to hunt down the great *bo*, by means of separate parties led by Captains D'Oyly and Brown, had rendered him a fugitive. He gave no further trouble to the British, but eluded all attempts to capture him.

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Amorapoorra, 6th March 1855.

My dear Major Phayre,

I had the pleasure of receiving your two letters of the 2d February on the 26th, just as I was starting for the Shouy Ga Young pagoda. The letters for the Nemmadaw woon and Woondawk, with the two boxes containing watches and a clock, were duly delivered.

Many thanks for the Home News you were so kind as to send me; it is the latest date we have received yet. But an Armenian arrived this morning from Rangoon only thirteen days on the road, and has brought some files of the Calcutta Englishman up

to the 5th February. What news there may be I have not yet heard, as he has taken them all to the Prince's house. Your Letter acknowledging having received the King's pagoda I took with me to the Palace and translated to his Majesty, who was well pleased to learn that his gift was acceptable and that you placed so much store by it. I really do not know what things will be most suitable for you to bring up for the King, but think that a good selection of toys would please him better than anything else. A Magic lantern I know he would like; a microscope of great magnifying power, or even a good telescope; anything of that kind would do. But whatever you do intend presenting his Majesty with, it will be better to do so in person, when you arrive here.

I had last the pleasure of writing you on the 20th ultimo by the Burman dawk boat. I then mentioned that Captain Dickens was speaking about taking this year's wheat and gram at the old price. I mentioned this to the King; and on the 20th wrote Captain Dickens saying that his Majesty was quite willing to let him have the crops on the old terms. I hope the next dawk boat will bring me a decisive answer to my letter on this subject, as the southerly winds will soon be setting in, and it would be to the interest of all parties to have the grain housed before the rains.

All the envoys were highly pleased with the reception they met with in Calcutta and the kind attention you paid them there. I believe they have all given a faithful report of every circumstance that took place—varying the tale perhaps a little. In one respect they did not differ in the least, and that was in praising you to the King for the unvaried kindness and attention shewn by you to them all, from first to last. Upon the whole I think the King was pleased with the way they conducted themselves in Calcutta. The Ka Lawoon shewed me the memo (furnished by you) of their last interview with the Governor General; something of the kind I expected would take place. You will remember that I wrote you previously that extravagant demands of the kind would be made, but again withdrawn on the Governor General showing displeasure. It is well that they now know distinctly that they can have no further hopes of recovering the Provinces again. I have seen little of Mongbathee since his arrival; he is unwell at present and keeps the house. The Woon-

dawk has been made a Woondawk again. And my friend the Ka Lawoon leaves tomorrow for Maloon; he will also have charge of the export and import duties collected there.

Our Rangoon and Calcutta letters being generally of a very ancient date, the King wishes the dawk boats in future to proceed on to Rangoon in place of stopping at Prome. To this I hope you can have no objection. Three will be kept going, one every ten days. They will touch at Thaet Myow and Prome going down, remain in Rangoon three days, and then return touching at Prome again. By this arrangement I will be able to write you regularly thrice a month. Although a few private letters will certainly be sent, I do not think that the *Post Office revenues will be much affected*.

I wrote you some time ago stating that a house for the British envoy was being built to the southward of the town. After being nearly finished, it was found that the water reached it when the river was high. So the King has given instructions to break it down and put it up in another place; where they are now going to build I do not think there is much danger of the water reaching you.

Enclosed is a memo of my trip to the Shouy Gan Young. I am afraid you will hardly find it interesting.

I will send this dawk boat to Mr. Barlas my Rangoon agent, and will continue to do so with the others until I know your wishes on the subject. Two packets, one for Rangoon and the other for Prome, will be sent.

The weather beginning to feel a little warm. Everything quiet here. We had a report some days ago of disturbances at Toungoo—something about a Poongee having got up a rebellion, but as you do not mention it, I suppose it is not true. And I remain,

Yours sincerely,

THOMAS SPEARS.

Journal of a three days' trip to the Shouy
Gan Young Pagoda.

February 26th—8 a.m. The elephants the King so kindly promised to provide us with having arrived, started for Shouy Gan Young in company with the Revd. Father Abbona,

A. Q. Camaretta and Makertish Ter Minas, each on his own beast. Taking a southerly direction crossed the Tounglaman by one of the bridges, and still travelling nearly due south came upon the Myet Gnay by 11 a.m. The country through which we passed appeared to be well cultivated, although some parts of it were barren and dry looking enough. We passed several fields of wheat and gram, with a few patches of Indian corn and tobacco. But the principal cultivation is rice, cut months ago, with the exception of a small portion lying in low ground still in a green state. Some of the wheat had also been got in, and the remainder appeared ripe and ready for the sickle. Gram is not in so forward a state; it will take at least a month to ripen. This being the dry season the roads were good, but very dusty, a state of matters not at all improved by the great number of carts travelling in the same direction as ourselves. With the exception of a slight swell of the ground here and there, the country through which we passed is a dead level, interspersed with groves of mangoes and palm trees, the former being in full blossom, shedding a delightful perfume all around, which, had it not been for the dust, one might have enjoyed. This part of the country is thinly inhabited. We saw few villages, none of which contained more than a hundred houses. Mangoes promise to be very plentiful this season. Crossed the Myet Gnay at the small village of Myow pyen gee, six miles from Amorapoor, on a temporary bridge composed of 68 small boats moored heads to the stream, about three feet apart, upon which platted [*sic*] bamboos, well covered over with sand and earth, were laid, so as to form a good road for carts and ponies. Not being sufficiently strong for elephants, the *tsen oo Gees*¹ swam them across the river which is both deep and rapid. We, crossing on foot by the bridge, got under the shade of some mangoe trees, where we had coffee and waited patiently until the elephants were again got ready. At noon proceeded on, the road now leading in a nearly S.S.E. direction. The country the same as the other side of the river for the first five miles, not half cultivated. Passed numerous groves of mangoe and other trees. Came upon a bend of the Myet Gnay, which having passed on our left hand, saw no more of it until our return. About this time, 11 miles from Amorapoor, the country begins to be intersected with

small canals fed from a dam built across the river Gogy, of which dam more hereafter. The country now begins to be better cultivated; you see little waste ground. Passed some large fields of sugar cane, some of it nearly ripe, the beautiful green colour of which contrasting *beautifully* with the burnt up paddy stubble. At 2 p.m. the sun being hot and the elephants tired called a halt at the small village of Shouy thlan Goon, where we waited patiently under the shade of a tree smoking segars until the dinner was got ready. This village consists of about 150 houses. All the inhabitants are employed in agriculture. At 4 p.m. man and beast being refreshed proceeded on. Passed several small manufactories of saltpetre. The road running south—very dusty—saw a number of sugar-cane fields—some were cut down and people employed bruising the cane—tried a stick myself and found it good. Had some difficulty in keeping the elephants from making depredations. Arrived at the village of Tsen gine by eight, and the remaining portion of the road to the pagoda being pronounced dangerous, took up our quarters for the night under a large tree. A Burman Choky of five or six men armed with spears and daws about twenty paces from us. The King had taken the precaution of placing Chokies of the same kind at intervals all along the road of three or four miles, so as to protect the people going to the fair from robbers. Shouy Gan Young three tains distant.

Had coffee and a segar and after a chat turned in for the night.

February 27th—3 a.m. Mounted and proceeded on, but the morning being dark lost our road several times. However, by making great exertions managed to get to Shouy tsan Young by 7 a.m. In this day's journey crossed the small canals by bridges several times. Here fortunate to get a small *Zayat*² to put up in, which had been secured some days before by Mr. Camaretta's people for the purpose of storing His Highness' book muslins, &c., &c. for the Queen mother to distribute to the country people on her arrival. After breakfast took a stroll about the village to see what was worth seeing. Had not gone far before we met the *Lettoung* Maengee, who invited us to go with him and inspect the dam he has nearly finished repairing over the river *Gogy* (or *Gogee*). It is built with stones brought from the

neighbouring mountains, and strengthened by rows of stakes driven in at intervals. No lime or cement of any kind being used, it is not exactly water tight, but sufficiently so to retain a large body of water even in the dryest seasons, to supply the numerous small canals that are fed from it. The Gogee rises in the Shan states and falls into the Myet Gnay about eight miles above old Ava. 63,000 *paes*³ of paddy land are at present fertilized by the waters of the Gogee, and another small river called the Paulong, which also falls into the Myet Gnay at Palike a village six miles above Ava. From the recent improvements and repairs the King expects that the cultivation of this year will not be less than 100,000 *paes*, which, at 100 baskets a *pae*, will turn out no contemptible quantity of paddy. In ancient times a much greater breadth of country is said to have been under cultivation, but from the carelessness of the Burmese after they got possession of Pegu, the greater part of the water courses had been allowed to fill up. *No yata* Gow⁴ King of Pagan some four hundred years ago was the first constructor of these works.

The village of Kyouk tsay (or Shouy tsan Young) contained about 700 houses and is situated close to the foot of the hill on which the Shouy Ga Young is placed, the river Gogee running through and nearly dividing it into two equal parts. On the outskirts of the town saw some sugar mills at work. The cane is inserted between two upright rollers, and expressed in that way, the whole being turned by a couple of buffaloes. The way they boil the sugar down is equally primitive. At noon being pretty well tired returned to our quarters, where after resting a while, went to take a look at the piece goods and other bazars. Found them located on the north side of the town, long temporary bamboo buildings put up for the occasion, and well supplied with all kinds of British manufactures, besides putseros and other country cloths. Saw also some Shans there with some of their country goods for sale, but not in the numbers I expected to find. I do not suppose there was more than from three to four hundred Shans at the fair in all. The heat of the day being over, ascended the pagoda hill on the west side by a flight of very steep steps cut out of the rock, and after a stiff pull, resting several times to recover wind, arrived at the top, when our

exertions were rewarded by a most splendid view of the country all round. The Tsagine hills were visible, but Amorapoora was hid from the sight by intervening hills. The winding of the Gogy could be traced for a considerable distance. The hill is composed entirely of rocks and large blocks of what I would call a hardish kind of sand stone, and may be about 2000 feet high. I could not help wishing I had it in Rangoon, as it would have answered admirably for building purposes. A blade of grass does not grow upon it; but at the very top, where the pagoda is, a few stunted trees are to be seen. The pagoda itself is an insignificant building deriving its interest from an old tale: something about a Shan princess being disappointed in love, at least so I have been told. Sunset descending determined to have another look at it in the morning.

28th. Rose very early and went up the hill by another flight of steps more to the northward. Reached the top by sunrise, but was greatly disappointed at finding that the dust caused by the great number of carts still arriving greatly obstructed the view, so after passing an hour or so on the hill returned. Encamped round about the hill there could not be less than 6000 carts. At 7 a.m. the Queen Mother arrived. Paid our respects to her, offering some presents. At 11 the Queen ascended the hill with all her people, returning about three in the afternoon. After which employed in distributing Goung bouns⁵ and handkerchiefs to the country people. Having seen every thing worth seeing, took our leave of the Queen, and at 9 p.m. started on our homeward journey. Arrived at the Myet Gnay by 4.30 a.m. 1st February without making a halt. At day light crossed the ferry as before and arrived at home in time for breakfast, very much delighted with our journey and very tired. Elephant travelling may be very dignified, but it is not at all pleasant.

T. S.

Shouy Ga Young is not less than 25 miles from Amorapoora I think.

¹ Elephant drivers.

² Rest house.

³ Pé, the Burmese measure of land, sometimes called a 'gyo'. It signified an area of paddy land capable of producing 100 baskets. Naturally therefore there was great variation in its extent. In some districts it coincided very nearly with an English acre.

⁴ Anawrahtā (1044–77), founder of the great Pagan Dynasty. This district was the ‘Ledwin’, the granary of the north. *Vide Harvey, History of Burma*, p. 25.

⁵ The Burman’s headdress; usually a brightly coloured silk kerchief tied round the head in characteristic fashion.

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Amorapoorah, 17 March 1855.

My dear Major Phayre,

Nothing of importance has taken place here since my letter of the 6th instant. The Ka Lawoon is still here, although he was to have left nine days ago; a dispute between him and another Envoy, the Woondawk, has caused this delay. However, he says that tomorrow he leaves for certain. This dispute originated in a difference in the way the Ka Lawoon and Woondawk made in describing their last interview with the Governor General: the Woondawk wishing to gloss it over a little and the Ka Lawoon sticking to the unvarnished truth. The memorandum you furnished the latter with having been shown to His Majesty settled the matter. After all I do not think that Mong Bo will go down at all, but his people have still got charge of a small district on the frontier—that portion of Meeaday lying to the northward of the boundary line.

I am very sorry I have not as yet been able to get a complete *Maha Yaza Waen*, I have not forgot it, but am keeping a good look out, and will send it down as soon as procured.¹ The King frequently speaks about you, and looks forward with interest—I may say pleasure—to your arrival here. He asked me some days ago whether I thought you would like to meet him in private after your public reception. I said that I did not see what objections you could possibly have to this, but on the contrary thought you would be most happy to do so. A while after the King said: ‘When he does come, I will have him in the garden by himself, where, as he speaks Burman well, we will be able to talk over matters privately, and it will go hard if he does not leave this with a favorable impression.’ The King had a daughter yesterday by the *Alay mindaw*;² he has generally an addition to his family in this way once or twice

a month. Sons and daughters I do not suppose he has less than seventy.

We have heard nothing lately from the Shan states or *Yamae-then*; everything is quiet there. The road by which the mules come from China also appears settled, as several large caravans have come in this month with copper, hartal, honey, hams, &c., &c. They are now preparing cotton for their homeward journey, for which they have had to pay 55 ticals a hundred viss.

We have heard that the export duties have been put on at Thayetmyow, this has caused no small sensation in the bazar, as few or none of the traders here have made preparations to meet this contingency. Will you kindly answer me the following question: should a Rangoon merchant of respectability guarantee the payment of duty on all goods, that *pass* Thayetmyow in his name, consigned to him by his Agent here, could the duty not be made payable in Rangoon? If in case this cannot be acceded to [*sic*], to be allowed to deposit money with the Collector at Thayetmyow (to account) and open an account with him, the goods only to be stopped there when that account is overdrawn. The King does not say much about those duties, but as a matter of course does not like them. His Cutch used formerly to go to Rangoon direct in his own boats, but now it will be stored at Maloon, he says, and the buyers will have to take it away.

I have had no definite reply from Captain Dickens about the grain yet. The most of it is now cut and the remainder ripe.

This Burman Dawk boat goes straight to Rangoon, touching at Prome and Thayetmyow both going and coming. Trusting you will approve of this arrangement,

I remain, &c.,

T. SPEARS.

¹ *Vide* Letter No. 193, note 1.

² Queen of the Middle Palace.

**ABSTRACT STATEMENT OF DUTIES LEVIED ON ARTICLES
EXPORTED FROM THAYETMYO BEYOND THE BRITISH
FRONTIER FOR THE MONTH OF FEBRUARY 1855**

Quality of Goods	Quantity	Declared value	Amount of duty
		Rs. a. p.	Rs. a. p.
Rice	117,015 baskets	60,433 5 9	7,313 7 0
Paddy	81,320 „	20,416 13 7	2,538 12 0
Betelnut	68,085½ viss	19,925 1 0	1,362 12 0
Salt	66,662½ „	6,484 0 0	666 10 0
Ngapie Goung	128,162½ „	29,818 12 0	3,131 7 0
Daway	15,540 „	1,236 4 0	155 8 0
Dameng	1,171,824½ „	102,461 6 0	5,966 10 0
Salt Fish Nyau	57,175 „	14,949 10 0	572 2 0
Dried do. Ngathaing	36,200½ „	8,953 2 0	544 8 0
Ditto Pazoongeen	3,762½ „	996 4 0	47 0 6
TOTAL Cos. Rupees 265,674 10 4			22,298 12 6

(Signed) H. M. LORD
Collector of Customs.

Thayetmyo,
14th March 1855.

**ABSTRACT STATEMENT OF ARTICLES REPORTED FROM
THAYETMYO BEYOND THE BRITISH FRONTIER, FREE OF
DUTY DURING THE MONTH OF FEBRUARY 1855**

Description of articles	Quantity	Declared Value
English Red Cloth	1,950 Bundles	Rs. 8,990 0 0
Madras Black cloth	64 „	4,800 0 0
English piece goods of different sorts	80 Boxes	9,600 0 0
China cups	10,000 „	800 0 0
Drugs	1,000 Viss	800 0 0
Longcloth	6,000 pieces	2,800 0 0
Cotton Handkerchiefs	20,000 „	980 0 0
Leaves for cheroots	9,000 Viss	450 0 0
		29,220 0 0

(Signed) H. M. LORD
Collector of Customs.

Thayetmyo,
14th March 1855.

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Private. Kotieghery, May 9th, 1855.

My dear Phayre,

The arrival today of your letter dated 2nd April has been a great satisfaction to me. For the long interval, which had elapsed since I last heard from you, was beginning to render me uneasy. And altho' I do not attach much weight to rumours from Ava or Pegu, still the Friend of India having endorsed a report of a revolution at Umerapoora, and there being repeated rumours of your having been attacked yourself, I could not help being anxious for authentic intelligence on both heads. Your letter effectually settles the latter; and Mr. Spears' successive letters up to 26th March seem to me to be equally conclusive as to the former.

It is not probable that you will again be absent during the rest of my stay in India. If you should be, it would be well that Mr. Spears should be requested to communicate regularly but briefly the state of affairs to the Deputy Commissioner at Rangoon, for my information during your absence out of the line of post.

Your account of the frontiers between Meeaday or Prome and Tounghoo is much what I expected. Next to a highly cultivated and well-peopled tract, the semi-desert you describe is probably the best frontier we could have. The trade report of which you send me a return is very satisfactory.

I shall be much obliged by the Pagoda—and will pay its price into the Toshakhana here. You can send or take to the King any personal present you like in return. And I would observe here, that there is no occasion for your asking assent to each interchange of this kind. All Commissioners have a Toshakhana account, in which such charges are regularly entered and are always recognised. While I am on this kindred subject I want to ask you to execute two Commissions for me.

1st. I want a couple of those enormous bamboos, which I saw in Pegu, and of which they make buckets. I want two good specimens, of sufficient length to have them made into wine-pails or something of that sort when I get home.

2nd. I want you to employ the man who made the model of

the Pagoda at Rangoon for the Paris Exhibition, or some other competent artist, to make me a model of one of those houses with the impracticable name,¹ which Lt. Blair brought up to Calcutta. I want it to be a working model—so that I can have an actual one made *from* it, if I like, when I get home. I want it on a scale of an inch to a foot—painted and gilded according to nature. A model of a building not more than 20 feet square would be best.

When you go to Ava don't forget my propensity for curiosities—and especially my longing for one of those chests for M.S., of which I wrote formerly. I don't care for the price of anything really curious and characteristic; and I shall be much obliged if you will take so much trouble for me.

I have endeavoured to compose your mission so as to render it as useful as possible. Mr. Douie sends me a very encouraging report and analysis by Mr. Piddington regarding both the Ava coal and that from Thayet-myo.

I come now to the attack on the Meeaday frontier.² It does not surprise me at all that you should feel exasperated by this insolent outrage. I do not feel it so keenly; partly because I am not so closely in contact with the sufferers, partly because I have always expected such outrages to take place, and partly because I am accustomed to hear of and to deal with similar outrages on our other frontier, without considering that they would be likely to embroil us with others than the actual perpetrators. I think you were quite right to address the Woonghee and to remonstrate strongly against such an outrage. Looking to the spirit in which the King has hitherto responded to such complaints—remembering his recal [*sic*] and removal of MOUNG-BO—and having regard to his recent appointment of Makertish—the Armenian—to be Governor of Melloon, I anticipate that the King will give no countenance to the actors in this recent aggression, and that more care than before will henceforth be taken to prevent them. This will be much facilitated by the establishment of our frontier Police, which I infer from your letter has not yet been effected.

I could not now refuse to send the Mission to Ava. My word was pledged to the Envoys at Calcutta that a mission should be sent, and the same promise was made in a letter to the King.

I could not now refuse to send a Mission, unless events had immediately occurred of sufficient magnitude to involve the states in war. In like manner I can not think that we should now be justified in demanding reparation for the people, who were carried away from Meeaday on a former occasion. We have allowed too long a time to elapse. We have since that time given a friendly reception to a mission from the King. We have promised a return mission in an equally friendly spirit. In my opinion we cannot after this go back to previous grievances, which were not insisted upon at the time. If this matter is not settled before the date at which the mission was to go to Umerapoor (as I hope it will be), you may advantageously confer upon this and other border difficulties with the King and his ministers.

Like yourself I have strong doubts of the policy of giving in to the King's price for wheat, when it has once been objected to. I shall leave the decision in the present case in your hands. But I must observe that I altogether object to any Commissariat officer concluding any bargain of this kind with the King, *excepting through you*. I beg you to be so good as to intimate this to the Chief Commissariat Officer in Pegu for the guidance of himself and his subordinates. If there is likely to be any bother about it, address the Government officially.

With regard to the Karen-nee Country² I am not disposed to quarrel with the Court of Ava about a Tract which, so far as my knowledge goes, is very little worth. This, like the question of the Meeaday frontier, will be most advantageously dealt with by yourself at Umerapoor. In the meantime don't let anybody put up boundary pillars, until we have more definite information about the country, and have endeavoured to come to an understanding regarding it.

I think I mentioned to you in a former letter that I proposed to retire from this Government in February next. I shall hope to see you once more before I go.

Always yours sincerely,
DALHOUSIE.

¹ Probably a *zayat*.

² *Vide* Letter No. 190.

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Extract of letter from J. Armitage, Esq., to the Most Noble the Governor-General, dated Colombo, 1st May 1855.

I think I cannot better evince my gratitude for the kind introduction you gave me to Major Phayre than by giving you my impressions of the Embryo City that is to bear your name, and later information as to what is doing there than can have reached you through the usual official channels. I was not so fortunate as to meet Major Phayre; he was absent on the frontier, but Major Fytche went down the river with me on the 2nd April in the 'Diana' steamer and remained till the 6th, during which time we were enabled to survey the river from Fytche point to the sea, and also to explore the adjacent country to some extent. Subsequently after Fytche's departure I remained as the guest of Mr. Edgecombe, the Engineer, till the arrival of our Schooner, the 'Sarah Armitage', on the 9th, on which date I embarked in her for Trincomalie.

Of one thing you may rest assured viz. that in a sanitary point of view the advantages of Dalhousie have not been overrated. I was out exposed to the sun or in the forests during the entire time of my stay, wading through nullahs and exposed to exhalations of every kind, so that if there had been any fever lurking in the jungles, I think we should have found it. Whereas I never felt better, and Mr. Edgecombe informs me that of 350 Coolies now cutting forest under him there is not one *laid up* with sickness, and of those, who have complained, the maladies have been slight such as sore throat etc., from which no country can be exempt.

With regard to Dalhousie as a great commercial Emporium I will give your Lordship my ideas candidly, as I have already done to Fytche and to the Engineer. I do not think there is any point on the mainland favourable for the construction of either Godowns or offices; for from Fytche Point down to the lower end of Negrais there is a mud bank of half a mile in breadth uncovered at low water, and it is only at Fytche Point and at the lower point opposite the high land of Negrais Island (which the Engineer purposes calling 'Phayre Point') that piers could be conveniently erected, and of these the upper one would be

exposed to the full force of the S.W. Monsoon, or nearly so. But let the plan be changed so far. Let the *City* of Dalhousie occupy its intended site, but let the *Port* of Dalhousie be on the Island of Negrais, and every difficulty will disappear, and you will have one of the finest ports in the World with deep water close to the shore, and perfectly sheltered. In Mr. Courtenay's sketch sent to Mr. Macarthy the Island of Negrais is mentioned as being *too low for human habitation*, and at the present moment it is certainly a mere mangrove swamp. But I have been over a great part of this low land with the Engineer during the Spring tides, and we could find no trace of the land being actually overflowed. It can then be easily drained, and let the drains be virtually canals, as in the annexed sketch (giving the canals exactly the same distance from each other as the main streets in the City of Dalhousie) the expense will hardly exceed that of making streets, and the material dug out will raise the intervening squares sufficiently high for building purposes. Twice every 24 hours the tide would wash away the litter from the place; the sea breeze would sweep through it continually; the Burmans coming down the river to trade could enter the heart of the town, sell their produce and lay in their purchases without ever getting out of their boats (which, Fytche says, would be just to their taste), and in case of fires there would be an inexhaustible supply of water permeating the town in every direction. There will be no difficulty from the character of the soil, which is clay with a slight admixture of sand in it, and if a moderate inclination were given to the banks neither piles nor masonry would be required. By adopting the above plan not only would you get rid of a swamp the appearance of which is not captivating (though possibly it may have little effect on the salubrity of the place) but you would banish the litter, noise, confusion and dirt, inseparable from a commercial Emporium, from the *City*; which in itself would be no trifling gain to the residents. Of course I conclude that, along with others, the merchants would ultimately reside on the main-land either in the city or in villas in the neighbourhood; but for the reasons already given I think they will always find it requisite to have their places of business on the Island. At all events I have applied for a tract there just on the borders of the swamp, and will take my chance. The

sketch I transmit to your Lordship is a copy of one made by the Engineer on the eve of my departure, and embodies his views as to the laying out of the City in addition to my own. No doubt it will reach you officially in course of time.

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Private. Coonoor. May 26th. 1855.

My dear Phayre,

Lately I received your official dispatch regarding the inroad under Shwé Bé. The remarks contained in my last letter regarding this affair, which I had then heard of only demi-officially, will have placed you in possession of my general views as to the course which the Government should take. A consideration of the official dispatch has greatly strengthened those views. They will, no doubt, be communicated to you officially from Calcutta. I will therefore not repeat them here, further than to say in brief, that in my opinion we cannot go back to the events of early summer last year, and that as regards the last case we are ourselves too much to blame to lay any great stress on our alleged ground of complaint. And here I am bound to say that, as at present advised, I think that the sin of omission which so weakens our case lies at your own door. Had the orders of the Government regarding the frontier police posts been executed, this raid would never have been perpetrated; and we should have been freed from a case which might have proved embarrassing.

You may have some reasons to give regarding the posts. I cannot conjecture them; but if they should be forthcoming, I shall be very happy to retract the opinion I have now expressed, and to exonerate you fully. It is not my intention to withhold the mission; but you have been requested not to dispatch it until further orders.

At Ceylon I saw a gentleman, Mr. Armitage, who wished to have an establishment in the proposed new town on the Bassein river. He went over there, and I have just received from him a long letter, of which the enclosed extract is the main part. I shall be glad to know what you and Fytche say to his objections and remarks.

Don't you make yourself unhappy about this frontier affair—I don't concur in your recommendations, and I think you made a mistake about the posts; but there is nothing to worry about.

Always yours sincerely,
DALHOUSIE.

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Henzada, May 18th, 1855.

My Lord,

I only received this morning your Lordship's letter of the 3d April. The packet for me had unfortunately passed me on the road. I enclose in original several letters received from Mr. Spears. I have been surprised to see in the Bengal papers an account of a revolution at Ava. I am wholly unable to account for these rumours. The Burmese certainly do, every now and then, repeat extraordinary stories of what goes on at Ava, but I always notice that the most exaggerated statements are made in the papers.

The King professes to be very anxious to atone for the attack on our people in the Meeaday district, and I believe him to be anxious to do so. I have received a civil letter from the Woon-gyee saying that justice shall be done. But we must, I think, insist on having our people back. Just now I should certainly be very sorry to see D'Orgoni at Ava. I will immediately write regarding him to Mr. Spears. Mr. Kincaid and Dr. Dawson, the American Missionaries, have been up to Ava. They were well received, as stated by Mr. Spears, and I think their permanent residence there hereafter will be of use to us.

I am exceedingly sorry, my Lord, to hear that you have been unwell since I saw your Lordship in December, but I trust the hill air will have now improved your health. May I hope that you will pay a visit to Rangoon before going home?

I will immediately, my Lord, make inquiries regarding young Lindsay of the 30th M.N.I. I have never met him, but will search him out for employment.

Major Allan has completed his work on the frontier and returned to Meeaday. I am going to propose that he should be sent up the Salween river from Maulmain to build a pillar on the river bank there in the latitude of 6 miles N. of Meeaday—

merely to show that we will not allow the Burmese to come south of that line anywhere west of the Salween. I hope your Lordship will approve of this.

Your Lordship will have noticed the death of Captain Madigan of H.M. 84th Regt., employed on the electric telegraph in Tharawaddee. Poor fellow, he was too confident and had taken no guard with him. The money he had was too powerful a temptation for that robber population, though so lately hunted down, and a party was formed to attack him.¹ It was simply a gang robbery and had no political object at all. This has somewhat retarded the electric telegraph, but not much. Between Prome and Meeaday messages can be sent by this time, as the wires were nearly all up two or three days ago. Tharawaddee is the only part now remaining, and I am pushing it on.

Regarding the revenue everything is satisfactory. The people are making great exertions to increase their cultivation. For the year just closed (i.e. 30th April, 1855) I expect a total of 15 lacs will be shown. For next year I look for a goodly increase on that.

The people appear well contented with our rule. The forest laws are the only unpopular part of the system: that is, because we must stop the utter ruin which went on under the Burmese, when everybody might cut young trees or old as they pleased. At first there is a difficulty in making people understand that they must do so no longer.

I respectfully request that Mr. Spears' letters may be returned to me, as I have only a portion of my establishment with me and am not able to have them copied. I am, My Lord,

with much respect your obedient servant,

A. P. PHAYRE.

I received your Lordship's letter by Mr. Armitage, and immediately wrote to Major Fytche to give him every assistance. Major F. informs me he is going to settle with a large establishment at Dalhousie.

¹ He had with him a sum of over one thousand rupees.

Amorapoor, 5 Apl. 1855.

My dear Major Phayre,

Our first dawk boat to Rangoon direct is now away exactly one month; it is due, and may be expected in tomorrow or next day, one month being the time allowed for the trip, which if they exceed, the Woongee has promised them a thrashing.

The house building for you on the south side of the Toung La man one is now nearly finished. It is a little, but only a very little, further from the town than the one that was pulled down. But it has the advantage of being dry in the high water and well protected from the heat by trees.

Petitions were received a few days ago from Yawmaethen and some other frontier stations to the northward of Toung oo. They state what I do not believe, and that is, that you have removed the posts, that marked the boundary line, a little further to the northward of where they were first laid down. The King, although I see him every other day, has not mentioned a word about this matter to me, Mr. Camaretta being my informant. However, I have good reason to believe that the King told him to tell me. Mr. Camaretta having requested me to write you about this, I told him there was not the slightest use in doing so, as I was certain from the tenor of former letters received from you that nothing of the kind could have taken place. But that I thought it possible that the line might have perhaps been carried further to the Eastward, or that perhaps the boundary posts being few and far between, others had been put in to fill up the intervals. Either of which circumstances might have given rise to the reports mentioned in the petitions. But that for my own part I believed nothing at all about the line being removed in the slightest degree to the northward of where it was first laid down.

I trust the next dawk boat will bring an answer to my letter of the 20th February to Captain Dickens regarding the grain. His last letter to me led me to believe that the Commissariat were going to take this year's crop at the old rates.

Yesterday by a boat of Mr. Grant's I received copies of a letter addressed to the Collector of Customs, Rangoon, by the

Deputy Commissioner, Captain Sparks, authorising him to make the frontier duties, chargeable at Thayetmyow, payable in Rangoon, on the guarantee of the party to whom they may be consigned to there, the consigners also holding themselves responsible for the duties. This has done away with a great inconvenience we were threatened with, and will, I have no doubt, be received by the mercantile body as a great boon—next only to that of having no duties to pay at all.

In my last letter I mentioned that Mong Bo had gone down to Meaday. A few days ago we heard that his people and the Ka Lawoon (Makertich) have had a dispute as to who was entitled to the charge of the Choky¹ nearest the frontier. By this boat the Woongee sends letters to both parties, which will settle the dispute. Mong Bo is a dependant of the Maguay Woongee, and it was through his interest with the King that he was allowed to go, the Woongee himself standing security for his future good conduct.

Mr. Grant's boat contained no merchandise, having been only sent up here to have some matters relative to the Young do timber, sold to him by the King, explained, he having received a letter from Mr. O'Riley when in Rangoon, stating that the said timber had been sold to him by Mong Bwa, Governor of Yamaethen, for Government purposes, in all some 10,000 logs. The King, I am told, denies the right of Mong Bwa to dispose of this timber, and has caused letters to be written to Mr. Grant by the return boat, assuring him that he will get the whole of it. Should Mong Bwa have really sold this timber to Mr. O'Riley, I am afraid he will get into a scrape.

Everything is quiet, and going on in the usual manner. The hot weather has now set in, this month and the next being the warmest in the year. *June*, although it may not bring rain, brings clouds, which obstructing the rays of the sun, the atmosphere gets cooled down a little. And trusting I may soon have the pleasure of hearing from you,

I remain, &c.,

THOMAS SPEARS.

¹ Military post.

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Amorapoora, 16th April 1855.

My dear Major Phayre,

My last to you was of the 5th by the Burman dawk boat. The day for this boat's leaving was yesterday, but owing to the last three days being holidays—the Burman New Year—it has been put off one day.

Five days ago our first return dawk boat came in from Rangoon, being thirty five days away. On the evening of the same day I was agreeably surprised by the Rd. Kincaid and Dr. Dawson dropping in. Their stay here, I believe, will be very short, only a few days, when they return to Rangoon to arrange matters there, and then come up here for good with their families. They have not seen the King yet, but today they have been promised an audience. His Majesty says that he will allow them to establish a school and dispensary, but on no account to distribute tracts and books to his subjects. This arrangement will for the present satisfy Kincaid, so I suppose that before many months pass over we may expect to have an American Mission regularly established here.

Father Abbona had a letter (or I should rather say ought to have had a letter from D'Orgoni) a few days ago. It was forwarded on by Mr. Fowl of Rangoon by a Burmese with particular instructions to deliver it personally to F. Abbona. But in place of doing so he took it to the palace, where the *Atween woons* opened it, and had it translated, without saying a word to Abbona, who has not even seen it yet. D'Orgoni says that he may be expected in Rangoon about the 20th March. That he was well received by the Emperor of the French, who sent him on a special Mission to the Crimea—conferring a *title on him*. That he is now sent out here with presents for the King (it is not distinctly said by whom). And winds up with a request that F. Abbona will petition the King to send down three boats as soon as possible to convey the presents up. Mr. Fowl says that he intends accompanying D'Orgoni to Amorapoora. These letters I have not seen, but I believe the contents are very much as above written. I had a letter from Captain Ardagh of the 25th ultimo, wherein he mentions that fresh disturbances had

taken place on that part of the frontier under Mong Bo's charge. This I am really sorry to hear, but cannot help thinking they must have taken place before Mong Bo's arrival. He left this very quietly; it was only by missing him at the palace that I thought of making inquiries, when I found that he had gone. I think there is every likelihood of his doing his best to keep the frontier quiet for the future, as his holding his present situation all depends on his being able to do so.

We have had no rain this year and consequently the country all round about has got a very parched up appearance. Pegu Cargo rice is now selling in the boat at 110 Ticals Yewtnee per 100 baskets. A month ago it was down as low as 80.

Mr. Barlas is speaking about leaving Rangoon, in which case it will be necessary for me to consign the dawk boat to some other party. How would it do to send it to Mr. Edwards, Collector of Customs there? It would not give him much extra trouble.

Everything quiet and going on in the usual manner. The weather particularly warm, and the roads very dusty. Your house on the south side of the lake will be quite clear of dust, having no roads near it.

And I remain,

Your very sincerely,

THOMAS SPEARS.

P.S. Captain Dickens has not written me about the grain yet.

T. S.

204

Amorapoorra, 17th April 1855.

My dear Major Phayre,

Yesterday I did myself the pleasure of writing you by the Burman dawk.

Today, by the orders of the King, Mr. Camaretta took Mr. Kincaid and Dr. Dawson to the palace, where they were well received. Their presents consisted of a large bible in Burmeas, and an abridged history of Europe in the same language, with a few more books. The King was particularly kind to them, inviting them to come up with their families as soon as they

possibly could, promising every assistance in his power to carry out their views in opening a school and dispensary. A bag containing one thousand rupees was given them by His Majesty. Kincaid said he thought it was a parcel of sweetmeats, and that he did not find out the difference until his Majesty retired, when as he told me he 'felt so annoyed'. After leaving the palace and remaining a short time at the Lootdaw, they were taken to the Prince's house; but for some reason or another he did not show himself, so that they were obliged to come away without paying their respects to him. The Prince has not been in a particularly good humour for the last few days, from his Atweenwoon having been assassinated, when returning from the Prince's house to his own about nine in the evening four days ago. The Assassination [*sic*] has not been discovered, but more than one poor unfortunate has been put the question and expired under it. Father Abbona is not a little jealous, as you may easily conceive, at all this attention being paid to the American Padres.

Kincaid has been to take a look at the building for the expected envoy on the south side of the town, and as he will without doubt see you, when he arrives in Rangoon, he will be able to tell you what sort of a place it is.

This afternoon we had a Northwester which stirred the dust up in grand style; but having been followed by a good smart shower of rain, the evening is beautifully cool. This is the first shower we have had for the last five months.

Kincaid starts very early tomorrow morning.

Yours very sincerely,

THOMAS SPEARS.

205

Amorapoora, 20th April 1855.

My dear Major Phayre,

I was duly favored with your letter of the 7th instant by the Burman dawk boat on the evening of the 18th.

After maturely considering about what you have said regarding the affair at the Kareen Village, I came to the conclusion that it would be the best plan to let the King know all about it at once. So next morning I went to the palace, and told His Majesty *all* that you have said on the subject. He expressed

himself very much displeased at the way his people have behaved, and told me to go home, and bring him a translation of that part of your letter. This I took to him in the afternoon when he ordered the Kyouk Maw Woongee, who was present, to send down a boat at once to bring Shouy Bé up, and also to send a man of some standing to make inquiries into the matter on the spot. When Shouy Bé arrives here it will then be known whether Mong Bo is implicated or not.

I can assure you His Majesty is desirous of remaining on the most friendly terms with you, and that the people now being called up, if found guilty on examination, will be most severely punished.

I have now the pleasure of addressing you by the boat that is going for Mong Shouy Bé; and as the people are waiting, will say no more at present. But remain,

Yours very sincerely,

THOMAS SPEARS.

206

Amorapoorra, 25th April 1855.

My dear Major Phayre,

On the 20th I had the pleasure of acknowledging your letter of the 7th instant by a boat sent down to bring up Shouy Bé. As a translation of my letter was shewn to His Majesty, I confined myself entirely to answering that part of your letter which treated of the late outrage committed on the frontier, reserving what else I had to say for the present opportunity. In your letter you say 'If you let the men of influence know that "this will never do" it will be well'. In a case of this kind by going to the King direct, and letting him know how the matter stands first, a great deal of valuable time is saved. If in place of doing that I had gone to the Woongee, it is ten to one he would have tried to slur over the statement to save his own man. As it was, he told the King that he did not think Mong Bo could have arrived at the time the outrage took place. But this will all be known when the man, who has been sent down to make inquiries, returns, and Shouy Bé is examined. If he has acted by the orders of another, he will not remain quiet and take all

blame on himself but will speak out and give up his authority for having acted as he has done.

I observe what you say about Father Abbona's not being very sanguine as to the peaceful issue of affairs above. There is, I think, some mistake in this matter. The councils of the King were never more pacific than they are at present. I cannot even see the slightest indications of any wish on his part to come to a rupture with the British. If I did, I certainly would be very little worthy of your confidence, should I not let you know of it at once. Besides the constant assurance the King is always giving by word of mouth of his pacific intentions, there are other indications which shew he has not the slightest idea of War. His selling largely to people on credit for the Calcutta market, which money he cannot get within six months; his advances for cotton, Teel seeds, Cutch, timber, grain and other produce, all intended for exportation, would be so much money thrown away to him in the event of disturbances taking place. Depend upon it Father Abbona is wrong in this case, or the party who quotes his authority has mistaken his meaning. Your letter to him was duly delivered, and I have no doubt he will write you by next dawk.

I trust this last affair of Mong Bo's people will be thoroughly sifted to the bottom, and that you will receive such satisfaction at the hands of His Majesty, as will admit of your coming up here this high water.

The marble Pagoda certainly left this and must be in Rangoon now. At the time Shouy Mong told you it was at Prome, it was on the way down, and I think you must have missed it on the road coming up to Prome. It cannot be lost, and I think it is likely you will find it with Captain Sparks in Rangoon.

Two days ago I received letters from Captain Dickens *refusing the grain*. This is all right, and I have now told the King that the commissariat does not want it. In this business I was a little misled by Captain Dickens' letter of the 23rd January. In it he says, 'I have written for sanction to making another contract with His Majesty the King of Ava, on the same terms as the past year, and I have *no doubt* the same will be accorded'. This I told the King at the time, having no doubt myself but the grain would be taken. I will be a little more cautious with

any other letters I may receive from Captain Dickens, and take 'no doubt' in future to mean very great doubt. You were perfectly right in thinking that Mr. Camaretta is anxious that things should remain on the most friendly terms between the two Governments. He has all along lent his influence to promote so desirable an object, and it is no fault of his that Mong Bo was allowed to go down again. I have told him that you express yourself obliged for his information about the [*word illegible, probably Karens*].

Many thanks for your trouble in forwarding my salary bills. The addition you speak of will be very acceptable,¹ more particularly as it shows me (I flatter myself) that you have not been displeased with my proceedings up here for the past year.

By the American Missionaries (Kincaid) I had the pleasure of writing you a short note. Two days after they left Father Abbona told the King that they were dangerous characters and had a good deal to do with stirring up the last war; and that if they were allowed to remain here, they were sure to bring the Kingdom into trouble. His Majesty took it all very coolly and answered that it was nothing to him what they had done before. He had invited them to reside here, and that so long as they paid attention to what he said, and did not distribute tracts, they might remain here as long as they liked. I was not at the palace at the time, but some Americans told me about it. And the next day, when I was there, the King himself told me the whole story, laughing very heartily at the jealousy of the Padry. I trust to have soon the pleasure of hearing from you again.

And remain, yours very sincerely,

THOMAS SPEARS.

¹ Apparently Phayre had informed Spears that in forwarding his salary bills for the year 1854 to Calcutta he would recommend that his salary for the year be made up to the promised amount of Rs.400 a month. In his official letter to the Government of India on this subject (dated 1st June 1855) Phayre wrote: 'Mr. Spears has been a regular and faithful correspondent, and I trust he will be deemed worthy of the reward promised him by the Most Noble the Governor General, in the event of his intelligence being satisfactory.' (*I.S.P.*, Cons. 29 June 1855, No. 51.)

207

Amorapoorra, 3rd May 1855.

My dear Major Phayre,

Your letter of the 18th ultimo giving cover to one for the Kyouk Maw Woongee only came to hand yesterday morning, the boat having been detained on the river by strong westerly gales. The letter for the Woongee I took to him at once. After reading it he then told me that next day he would give me a letter for you. However, in the evening he sent to request me to detain the boat a day longer, as he had not had time to finish it. His letter for you I have just now received, and the boat will start early tomorrow morning.

In my previous letters I mentioned that people had been sent down to bring up Mong Shoy Bé and others accused of the late outrage. Today a party have been sent down for Mong Bo and a number of other people suspected of leading irregular lives. They are to be brought up as prisoners, and I think it is not unlikely but that some of them may be capitally punished. After all those people have arrived here and been examined, the *Woongee* will have to write you again on this subject. Depend upon it that this last offence of Mong Bo's will not be dealt with in the same way as was done with that, which caused his being called up here some months ago, but on the contrary will be thoroughly investigated and the guilty parties punished. The King has set his mind on this, and you may rest assured that you have seen the last of Mong Bo. It is not yet settled who will be sent down to fill up his place.

It is likely to be the Myet Tsan Woon—Mong Tso.

I saw the King yesterday and today was favored with a private audience by His Majesty, Mr. Camaretta only being present. The subject of conversation was entirely confined to the last unfortunate affair and the letter you have written upon the subject. The King is very angry with all concerned in it, and even the Woongee, who was the cause of Mong Bo's being ever sent down again, did not escape censure. From all that His Majesty said, and I have not the least doubt of his sincerity, I feel assured that no more outrages of the nature of the one complained of now will again take place on the frontier. On an extensive frontier like that, which divides the province of

Pegu from the Empire of Burmah, dacoities may take place at times. This it may be impossible for the King altogether to prevent, but he has told me to assure you that he will do the best in his power to put them down, and that any representations made by you on the subject will be promptly attended to, and redress, as far as it lies in his power, given. The King is therefore annoyed at this affair, as it is likely to put off for a time your coming up here—depriving him of the pleasure he anticipated from your visit. During the last month we have had some strong northwesterners doing a great deal of damage to the boats on the river, numbers having been sunk.

Some two or three thousand logs of the King's timber got adrift from this cause ten days ago, and as the river rose at the same time some three or four feet, I should not be at all surprised at some of it finding its way to Prome without the expense of rafting.

The *The Baw Maentha* (Bo moo Maen tha)¹ arrived here some days ago from Monae, having left everything quiet in that quarter.

I trust the news of the fall of Savastopal will turn out to be true, but the date of the mail by which it is said to have come out, the 9th March, leaves room for doubt on the subject.

The heat of the weather has been something extraordinary for the last ten or fifteen days—100° to 103° in the shade. And I am now writing with a piece of blotting paper under my hand to keep the perspiration from soiling the paper. We will have about another month of it, when we may reasonably expect the weather to be considerably cooler; and trusting to have the pleasure of hearing from you soon,

I remain, yours very sincerely,
THOMAS SPEARS.

¹ i.e. Thibaw Mintha (Bhamo Mintha); Mintha = Prince.

208

Amorapoorra, 6th May 1855.

My dear Major Phayre,

Your dispatch boat left this on the 4th with the Maenggee's reply to your letter. As he tells me he is going to give you

satisfaction for Mong Bo's first offence, I trust everything will soon be put to rights again.

By this dawk boat I send some mangoes, got from the King's gardens. Should you be still at Prome I beg you will accept of the one half of them. The other half is for Captain Ardagh. As they are rather too ripe, I do not think they would keep to send as far as Rangoon. The best kind of mangoes are not in season yet.

The people sent down for Gun Shouy but [*sic*] have not yet returned, but they must be here very soon now. Mong Bo, being only sent for a few days ago, will not be here for some time yet.

The weather still continues to be very warm with a north-wester at times.

Everything quiet here, and I remain,

Yours very sincerely,

THOMAS SPEARS.

209

Private. Coonoor. June 15th. 1855.

My dear Phayre,

I had the pleasure of receiving a few days ago your letter of 18th May with Mr. Spears' letters enclosed. These I now return. It is very satisfactory to see that the King has taken up the affair near Meeaday in a good spirit. My last letter will already have told you that I do not concur with you as to either the expediency or the fairness of making a demand for the people carried off during the earlier days of our occupation.

The continued accounts of the Coal at Thayet myo are really good news. I do not understand the revenue calculations—you reckon 15 lakhs; the Accountant in his *regular estimate* for 1854-55 makes out 23 lakhs of cash received from all sources. I hope he is right. His estimate, of course, includes the provinces over the water.

The settlement of the Americans at the capital *ought* to be in our favour; and on the whole I think it will be. Mr. Kincaid's reported distress at receiving a bag of rupees instead of comfits was very good. The murder of Captain Madigan was very distressing, and apparently almost invited by himself.

It is my wish—and at present is my intention—not to leave

India without paying a farwell visit to Rangoon. Whether I shall be able to accomplish it must depend on several circumstances, which I cannot determine so long before hand. However, you shall have timely notice if I can come.

I am recovering up here gradually and slowly.

Always yours sincerely,

DALHOUSIE.

210

Rangoon, June 3d, 1855.

My Lord,

I returned to Rangoon on the 28th ulto. I find that great improvements have been made in the town during the last five months. Indeed it begins to have the appearance of what it will be—a fine city, and should your Lordship come this way, I hope you will be pleased with what has been accomplished.

I enclose the last letter received from Mr. Spears dated 15th May. I have had a copy of it made and enclosed it to Mr. Dorin.¹ The Woongyee certainly appears to be anxious to punish the perpetrators of the attack on the villagers in the Meeaday district.

I have received my instructions² relative to the Mission to Ava which have my best attention.

M. D'Orgoni left this some days ago for Ava with one or two followers by boat.

Your Lordship will probably have heard of the murder of Captain Madigan employed in laying down the line of electric telegraph. Unfortunately he had no guard with him, and in Tharawaddee this was a fatal mistake. The whole of the murderers were taken and I have sent up the trial by this steamer. There has been also an attack on one of Lieut. Forlong's parties, where treasure was kept. None of it was carried off, but a sepoy was killed. This, no doubt, was an attack by some of the coolies employed on the works.

I have written to Mr. Dorin to ask if any of the presents can be set apart for the Queen.

The marble pagoda, which the King had made, is here, and I will either keep it here for the present or send it to Calcutta, as your Lordship may direct.

I believe I have at last found that jackals do exist in Burmah!

The animal is certainly different from that of India, but I have seen them and think they must be pronounced to be jackals. I have a skin of one, which I send up by this opportunity to Mr. Blyth of the Asiatic Society to pronounce upon.

I trust the mountain air is proving beneficial to your Lordship's health, and am,

with much respect, My Lord, your obedient servant,

A. P. PHAYRE.

¹ President of the Council during Dalhousie's absence from Calcutta.

² Phayre's instructions relative to his Mission to Ava were issued in two parts. The first, written by Dalhousie in a minute dated 12 April 1855 (*I.S.P.*, Cons. 29 June 1855, No. 2) consisted of general directions for the preparation of the Mission. It is to this that the above allusion is made. The second part containing detailed instructions as to the conduct of the Mission, together with a list of presents valued at over a lakh of rupees; a letter to the King and a draft of the proposed treaty was conveyed to Phayre by Government of India, Foreign Dept. Letter No. 101 of 1855, dated 18 July 1855. (*Vide I.S.P.*, Cons. 27 July 1855, Nos. 27-32.) In the general directions of 12 April 1855 Lord Dalhousie wrote that the fittest time for the return Mission to proceed to Amarapoora would be during the months of June and July, after the rains had fully set in. The presents from Mindon Min had proved ultimately to be worth less than Rs.25,000, but the Governor-General felt that the return presents 'should be of a nature and value appropriate to the power and wealth and dignity of the British Government, by whom they are to be offered'. The Heir Apparent, he thought, should be treated with studied liberality. The Mission, he said, 'could not be entrusted to better hands' than those of Major Phayre, who was to be authorized to spend money liberally, 'though not unnecessarily profusely', to maintain the dignity of the Government of India. Phayre was to be accompanied by a well-selected staff 'capable, in various ways, of collecting and furnishing information to the Government upon all points, on which it may be of advantage hereafter to possess accurate knowledge, and which may be useful also for our present purposes'.

Dr. John Forsyth, Superintending Surgeon in Pegu, should accompany the mission in order to obtain useful information for Government 'regarding the climate, the sanitary character, and the natural productions of the Country'. Major Grant Allan, the officer who had performed such useful service in demarcating the boundary, should be attached to the Mission in order 'to gather information, and to make valuable observation, for the Government on all military questions connected with Burma and the route to the capital'. Surveys of the Irrawaddy above Myede would be of great advantage, in order to find out what changes had taken place in the course since the last survey was made in 1826. Captain Rennie of the *Zenobia* was named for this

task. As it was of great importance to ascertain 'what are the existing and available mineral resources of Burmah, and especially what is the quantity; the quality and commercial value of the coal beds, of which we have heard, in the neighbourhood of Ava', he conceived that it would be 'very proper' to attach Professor Oldham, Superintendent of the Geological Survey of India, to the Mission. Mindon Min had, he understood, expressed his willingness to render accessible to the British such coal-mines as were in his dominions. An artist also should, he thought, accompany the Mission to furnish Government with a better idea of the natural features of the country than it can glean from written reports. 'At the same time his sketches of the people and cities and palaces and his portrait of the sacred White Elephant, as well as of "The Lord of all White Elephants", would give a life and interest to the future Report of the Mission, which the Honourable Court, I conceive, would think well worth the small additional expense it would create'. Mr. Colesworthy Grant, an artist of Calcutta, with whose powers Lord Dalhousie was acquainted, was suggested for this task, with the further suggestion that if he could also practise photography it would please the King, who wanted instruction in the novel art of producing 'sun pictures'. Mr. R. S. Edwards, the Collector of Customs at Rangoon, who had been interpreter to many missions and had an intimate knowledge of the Burmese Court, was indispensable to the Mission. Finally for the important post of Secretary, Phayre must choose the best possible man. The Mission, the minute concluded, would proceed to Amarapoora by steamer with flats and would be accompanied by a European guard. All its officers would receive adequate deputation allowances. In the official letter (*I.S.P.*, Cons. 29 June 1855, No.3) conveying the above minute to Phayre these were given as follows:

Dr. Forsyth Rs.300.

Major Allan Rs.300.

Commander Rennie Rs.300.

His assistant Rs.200.

Professor Oldham Rs.300.

The Secretary Rs.500.

Mr. Edwards Rs.200.

The Medical Officer Rs.200.

Colesworthy Grant was to be paid a salary of Rs.500 *per mensem* with free passage and table expenses to Amarapoora and back and certain concessions regarding the sale of his pictures. (*Ibid.*, No. 5.)

211

From T. Spears Esquire to Major A. P. Phayre,
Commissioner of Pegu, dated Amarapoora, 15th May, 1855.

I had the pleasure of receiving yours of the 27 ultimo by the dawk boat on the 7th instant, and that of the 22d under cover

to F. Abbona on the 13th; and now as I am sitting down to write for the dawk which leaves to-day, yours of the 1st instant has come to hand. The letter for the Woongee has been duly received and will be delivered to him this evening on his return from Tsagine, where he has gone, this being a Burman Sunday, to worship. The King, I have little doubt, will shew me the depositions sent to the Woongee; but, as he will not see them before tomorrow morning, when the Ministers go to the *Nelacan*,¹ I may not be able to let you know by the dawk what he says on the subject.

I do not know very well how to answer that part of your letter which implicates the Eng Shae Maen in the late outrage. Mong Bo is the Woongee's man, and although he did go at times to the E. S. M's house he was not a hanger on there. The treatment Mong Bo and his people receive, when they arrive here, will shew pretty plainly, I think, if any of the head men have been concerned in this business. The King, I am certain, will read over all the documents sent up bearing on this subject. The other day, when at the Woongee's house, he said to me: *'If I don't lose my place, or die, you will see how those people now being called will be punished.'*

Mong Myet toon is here. He lives in Old Ava. About a week ago I saw him at Mr. Camaretta's house. He was complaining a good deal about not receiving regularly the monthly salary (250 T.) promised by the King. Mr. C. gave him 50 ticals in silver, some book muslins and other sundries. Mong Myet toon's son is also here. A grown-up daughter of his died of small pox about a fortnight ago. Mong Myet toon would like, I believe, to go down and try his hand at dacoity, if allowed. Mong Gong Gee² either is, or has been, in the district of Meaday, but orders have been sent from this, I am told, to expel him from that, or if he wishes to remain quiet, to allow him to come up to Amorapoora.

There will be plenty of room for the 30 Europeans you speak of bringing up with you as a guard. Besides your own house, which is large and roomy, there are other smaller ones built for the Captain of the guard, Doctor, or other officers you may bring up; also, besides other outhouses, a long range of building inside of the compound, that would accommodate not less than

a hundred men. There have also been built outside the compound, but close to the fence, a range of huts for the Burman Guard of honor, which will be stationed there as long as you remain at Amorapoora.

I observe what you say about presents for the King. You should certainly have presents for the Heir Apparent also: it would not be politic to neglect him, even although he has not always shewn the most friendly disposition. You should also, I think, have a present for the principal Queen—*separate* from that which you give to the King. No presents are required for the other members of the royal family.

The wheat and gram all remain on hand, no one here being able to give the price asked for it. The King has caused Mr. Camaretta to write to the principal mercantile firms in Rangoon offering it for sale, but I do not think he will find purchasers, unless he comes down greatly in the price. Do you still want the grain, if it can be had at 180 for gram and 220 for wheat? This would not be too much, landed at Prome. The King has not said he will sell at those prices; but if he does not, the grain will be lost.

Paya ta ga³ Mong Tsine was the person who took *the* Pagoda down. If it has not been delivered to Captain Sparks, you had better call him and ask where it is. He is at present in Pegu purchasing paddy for the King and superintending the delivery of cutch.

We have always got some ridiculous story or another in the bazar. The last was that *you* were coming up with a large force, accompanied with guns and steamers. This was even told to the King, who, although he did not believe it, thought there might be something in it. *The price of gold was affected by it.* The King would not like you to bring up any cannon with you to fire off on the road or on arrival here, it not being the Burman custom to fire salutes.

I never felt the weather so warm as it has been this year; it is quite oppressive. By next dawk I hope to be able to give you a satisfactory account of Mong Shoy Bé and Mong Bo.

¹ Nelacan = Nyilagan; *vide* Letter No. 83, note 2.

² The fugitive dacoit leader.

³ Title given in Burma to one who has earned merit, according to the Buddhist religion, by building a pagoda.

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Private. Kotieghery. June 30th. 1855.

My dear Phayre,

I have had the pleasure of receiving your letter of 3rd inst. enclosing one from Mr. Spears of 15th May, which I return. The conduct of the King as to Moungh Bo has fulfilled my anticipations, and I am glad to feel that it is not likely any trouble will arise out of his proceedings or those of his followers. I have detained the mission for a fortnight for the answer to some questions I had asked. The instructions, letter, etc. will go to Calcutta by the next mail steamer.

Pray keep the King's Pagoda. I hope to see it at Rangoon myself. If not, I will write to you again regarding it.

Believe me to be, Yours sincerely,
DALHOUSIE.

213

Rangoon, June 16th, 1855.

My Lord,

A few days ago I received your Lordship's letter of the 9th May. In case of my absence again I will arrange for Mr. Spears' letters being forwarded. I have whilst writing this received a letter of the 5th inst. from Mr. Spears, of which I send a copy, as also of one dated the 26th ulto. By the same boat I have received a letter from the Woongyee, in which he promises that justice shall be done for the late inroad. I believe also that in consequence of the chief offenders having been removed from the frontier, a great number of people have returned. The Guards on the frontier have now been placed by Major Allan, so that I do not think such an affair as the present one will occur for a long time to come. But the Burmese (like all half savage people) are incapable of acting in a steady peaceable manner for a continuance.

From the letter of Mr. Spears dated the 5th inst. your Lordship will see that the King wants us to leave the steamers at Maloon. Of course I shall reply that it is simply impossible to comply with such a proposition.

I beg to enclose a return showing the export of rice and paddy

for the year ending April 1855. It is very considerable, and shows what a vast rice-producing country this will become. Your Lordship will notice how the King has suffered for his wheat, from not having accepted the first offer made. On reaching Ava I will see if an advantageous arrangement cannot be made for next year's crop. I have also spoken to Major Simpson, the Chief Commissariat Officer here, and no bargain of this kind will in future be made except through me.

The Ava mission is all that could be wished. Regarding a secretary I have written to Mr. Dorin that I cannot select a duly qualified man here and requesting him kindly to nominate an officer to the appointment.¹ We ought to be able to make a very complete and interesting report.

When your Lordship comes here at the end of the year, I hope to have ready a complete report on the Province in the same general form as the Panjab Reports. We cannot make such an interesting statement as is there given, but I hope to be able to show that the seed is sown for a future plentiful harvest.

The model pagoda will go up to Calcutta and I will have the model ornamental building put in hand. I shall not forget also to pick up in Ava anything which I think will be acceptable to your Lordship, particularly one of the chests for M.S.

The large bamboos also shall be procured.

I trust the mountain air has completely restored your health. I am, My Lord,

with much respect your obedient servant,

A. P. PHAYRE.

By this steamer I forward Mr. Login's report on the Bassein river. He sees difficulties but not insuperable. The expense he calculates at 370,000 Rs., a very small sum for the object in view.

Major Fytche, I am sorry to say, has been suffering in health, and fears he will have to go home.

¹ For this post Captain Henry Yule, then Deputy Secretary to the Government of India in the Department of Public Works, was chosen (*I.S.P.*, Cons. 29 June 1855, No. 8). This officer, one of the most distinguished oriental scholars ever produced by Great Britain, was at the time best known to the outside world as an authority on fortification. His father, Major William Yule of Inveresk, had served in the East India Company's army, retiring in 1806.

A student of oriental literature, he had amassed a valuable collection of Persian and Arabic manuscripts, now in the British Museum. Henry Yule entered the East India Company's service in 1840, being appointed to the Bengal Engineers. He served first of all among the Kasias, a primitive Mongolian people in the North East borders of Bengal, of whom he wrote an account. Later on (1843-9) he took part in the restoration of the Mogul irrigation system in the North-West Provinces. After the Sikh Wars, throughout which he served, he spent two years at home on furlough, returning to India in 1851. Lord Dalhousie selected him for the Under Secretaryship of his newly-formed Public Works Department in 1855, and he was, at the time of his temporary detachment to the Ava Mission, busy with railway development in India. His famous report of this Mission, published in 1858 as *A Narrative of the Mission to Ava in 1855*, is by far the most scholarly and complete of all the accounts of Burma written by English envoys to her capital, not excepting even the fine description by Crawford, and it attracted wide attention to its compiler. *Vide D.N.B.* excellent article by Coutts Trotter for further information regarding him.

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Amorapoor, 26th May, 1855.

My dear Major Phayre,

Mong Shouy Bé arrived here eight days ago, and the day before yesterday Mong Bo was brought in. They have not been examined yet, at least not publicly, on account, the King says, of some of the others implicated not having yet arrived. In the meantime they are all in confinement. The King yesterday told me that they would all be punished in such a way as would prevent occurrences of the same kind for the future taking place on the frontier. But he has not made up his mind as to whether it will be better to do so before you come up, or on your arrival here. In the latter case, he says, it might be more satisfactory, as you would then see that he meant to act fairly; whereas by punishing them before your arrival, you might have some doubts on the subject. Being asked by His Majesty what, I thought, would be best to do, I recommended their being punished at once. The Woongyee, I have little doubt, will write you on this subject soon. The depositions, contained in the last letter you sent the Woongyee, have not been shown me, the King merely alluding to them once in a general way.

The Eng Shey Maen by his rank is doubtless the second

person in the Kingdom, but his position is very different now to what it was a year ago, or, I may even say, six months. His feelings towards the British Government may be anything but friendly, but that is of little consequence, as he has not the power to do harm, the Government being entirely in the hands of the King or those he can trust, the E.S.M. having hardly a voice in the matter. The King, notwithstanding his having monopolised almost every article of produce, a proceeding that would have rendered him unpopular in almost any other country in the world, is much beloved by his subjects, who think they could not get a better man to reign over them. His brother, altho' much liked once, is not so now, and should he ever, getting disgusted at the tight hand the King holds over him, make up his mind to try his fortunes in the field, with the exception perhaps of a few robbers I do not think he would get a single *good* man to join him. However, I do not think there is any likelihood of his trying to get a rebellion up. He respects his brother much and would not *dare* to disobey him (at least not openly). The King, besides being a man of much better disposition than the E.S.M., is also infinitely his superior in wisdom and cunning *and the art of managing people*. The general opinion down below is that the King wants energy. This is very far from being the case: he busies himself in inquiring into the smallest matters and reads himself every petition that is presented. Almost everyone has access to him either personally or through their friends. Besides which, he makes a tour every now and then round the Palace for the purpose of receiving petitions from those, who might not otherwise be able to make known their grievances. It would perhaps be rash to speculate on what might happen on the King's death. But even in that event I do not think that a war would be certain, ~~but that~~ the E.S.M., who would then be King, knowing the stake at hazard and the little chance he had of winning, would keep on good terms with the British Government. The King is a healthy man, a very few years older than his brother, and with every chance of living long.

I had some conversation lately with F. Abbona regarding what you said as to the likelihood of an outbreak soon caused by the Prince. He says that six or eight months ago he was afraid

that such might happen, but that now the King having taken all the real power into his own hands, he has changed his opinion, and thinks now that there is not the least chance of anything of the kind taking place.

The King has commenced selling his grain and has disposed of about 7000 baskets of each kind. The gram at 100, and the wheat at 120 per hundred baskets (Ywetnee). The difference between the Ywetnee he takes and rupees is just 40 per cent. From the scarcity of boats I do not think it can be in Prome in less than a month and a half. It will be offered for sale there, and if not disposed of, taken to Rangoon. None of it belongs to me.

This dawk boat will be sent to the care of Mr. Edwards, and I remain,

Yours very sincerely,

THOMAS SPEARS.

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Amorapoorra, 5th June, 1855.

My dear Major Phayre,

On the 26th ulto. I had the pleasure of writing you by the Burman dawk boat. Nothing of the slightest importance has taken place here since. Mong Bo and a number of his people are in confinement and will be kept there, the King says, until you come up, so that matters may be settled in a satisfactory way. Mong Bo is not exactly in confinement, but he has given security to be forthcoming when required, and has been ordered to keep his house.

When at the Palace two days ago the King requested me, when I next wrote you, to say—*not in his name*, but as if coming from myself—that he would not like your coming further up the river in a steamer than Maloon, where he wishes you to embark in boats that will be sent there for the purpose, the best that can be had in the country. The idea of a steamer coming up here he does not like, as he is afraid that it might alarm the country. The King also requested me to say that he would like you to write to the Woongyees some time before you do come, stating the time you intend leaving Prome and when you may be expected at Malon, so that you may be received with all honor. The King is also going to have tents built at different

stations on the river side, so that you may be enabled at times to go ashore and recreate yourself.

Your house is now entirely finished. It has been much improved since Mr. Kincaid saw it: the windows widened and the matting of the walls doubled in most places. The outhouse and compound fence is also finished. The King is always expressing himself anxious that you may come up soon.

The Native Chinese Christian that I wrote you had gone on to *Taleefow* some months ago—he has returned with letters from the Catholic Priest there to F. Abbona. The Province of Yawnan is represented as being quiet and that the customs and tribute are paid as formerly, the only difference being that they are not quite certain whether it is the emperor or the rebels that get it, at least so writes the Priest. All the other parts of China are said to be in a very disturbed state; so much so that a priest, who arrived at *Taleefow* about 2 months ago by the way of Canton, took eight months to perform the journey. They know nothing there yet of the war in Europe except what they had heard from here; but the papers, which will be forwarded on from this in a few days, will enlighten them a little. Amongst other small things the Priest's man brought was a quantity of rhubarb, apparently very good. This is a very scarce article in Europe at present, and as he says it can be had at a small price in China, it may in time become an article of export.

The Loot daw now writes you about Mong Bo's business. I trust what they have said on the subject would prove satisfactory. They say they are going to give compensation for the other village that was robbed about the time Mong Bathee was proceeding to Calcutta.

The King has now disposed of all his wheat at 120 Ticals Ywetnee per Hd. baskets, but a considerable quantity of the gram still remains on hand, the selling price 100 Ywetnee. Next year if you could get the grain for those prices, I think the Commissariat ought to take it. Wheat will stand, if landed at Prome, per hd. baskets:

120 Ywetnee @ 40 per cent Cs. Rs. 168

Boat hire per 100 baskets say 24

Cs. Rs. 192 per 100

hundred maund—but then you would require to run the river risk, and the parties purchasing and shipping it here would look for a commission. The King takes 140 Cs. Rs. in place of 1 viss Ywetnee.

I have just heard that D'Orginy [*sic*] has arrived, but have not as yet seen him.

With the exception of a shower now and then we have had no rain up here this year. The weather is very warm—and trusting it may be cooler with you,

I remain, yours very sincerely,
THOMAS SPEARS.

216

Private. Kotieghery, July 3rd, 1855.

My dear Phayre,

Today I have prepared the instructions for you on your Mission as Sole Envoy to the Court of Ava.¹ The instructions are very full; and have omitted nothing, I think, which can be necessary for your guidance, or which can be calculated to save you from embarrassment or an undue degree of responsibility. I will add a few remarks in a private form.

Your mission, I think, is well composed, and ought to prove useful to the Government by the result of its conjoint labours. I trust that you will make each gentleman understand that he is not sent on a party of pleasure; but is expected to keep his eyes and ears open at all times in regard to the matters which are allotted to him as his peculiar function, and to be diligent, as well as accurate and cautious, in recording the results of his observations and inquiries.

You have been authorised to select the several presents for the King etc. You will need to exercise caution and tact in regard to the Eng-she-meng; so as to observe towards him the respect and conciliation which are politic, without giving him any undue prominence, so as to excite the jealousy of the King. Adverting to your former letter, in which you mentioned the scientific attainments of the Queen, I have requested Mr. Dorin to obtain some scientific instruments such as you formerly mentioned, to be added as presents for Her Majesty to the list

you already have. My only fear is that if they be procured and presented this learned lady may *stick up* the members of the Mission by her questions as to their use! You must regulate your gifts, therefore, according to your Collective Knowledge. There are already jewels and ornaments enough for her; but if I could have procured a pair of *Blue Stockings*, I would certainly have sent them for Her Majesty in addition.

In regard to the ceremonies of reception I feel every confidence that you will neither be too pliant nor too stiff. Full authority is given to you under this head in the instructions, and I rely on your discretion and firmness. I have sent a special message to the soldiers and seamen, who may accompany you, which I request you will take a fitting opportunity of delivering to them formally yourself. I hope that they will not leave a character behind them as drunkards, brawlers or licentious; and that they play their part well in maintaining the reputation of England. When the men are allowed to go into the town their officers must take proper precautions for the observance of discipline and good order even there. And at all times they should be properly dressed.

In this last respect I trust the gentlemen attached to the mission will also be careful. Upon all public occasions of ceremony they will as a matter of course be in full dress; and whatever they may wear, when out of sight, I expect that when they appear in public *any where*, they will recollect that they are members of a Mission from their Government, and that consequently they will be properly dressed, and will forego on these occasions the slovenly luxury of shooting-jackets and wide-awakes. They should not be outdone by barbarians; and should bear in mind that the Burmese mission in Calcutta never neglected this proper form.

The instructions are so ample in regard to the endeavours you are to make in order to procure a Treaty of Amity, that I really have nothing to add. I may observe, however, that if any alteration in the wording of the Draft Treaty, now sent to you, would be likely to remove difficulties, you will be at liberty to make it. But you should not make it unless you find it to be **absolutely necessary**; and you should on no account make any **alteration**, which will change the sense of the Articles as they

now stand, or involve us in any stipulations *of detail*. If the King will make a personal Treaty, but not one for heirs etc., it will be better than none.

You will achieve a success, which will be very acceptable to the Home Authorities as well as to myself, if you should manage to obtain a Treaty. But I am not sanguine as to the probability of inducing the King to consent to any Treaty. Wherefore I shall not be surprised, or at all disposed to find fault, if, after every exertion has been made, you should fail at last.

After your arrival you will judge whether a present to Father Abbona would be well and usefully bestowed. If so, your instructions will admit of your *gratifying* the Padre.

D'Orgony will no doubt be at the Court. You should not treat him as a enemy to us, while perfectly sure that he is so to his very worst. Do not treat him with disregard, but do not appear to consider him of any importance. And before you leave Umerapoor, possess the King or the Lootdaw fully of his real character and position; and if they do not already understand it, make them comprehend the meaning of the marked repudiation, which the French Government has made of him in any official character.

You and Professor Oldham will do your best to find out as much as possible about the Coal in Burmah. Our discovery of the article in our own territory will probably make the King more reasonable about it, if he were inclined to be as great a Hebrew in coal as in corn.

Professor Oldham will, of course, examine the Thayet myo coal. While he is in that country it would be well if he could examine it all. Finally make your artists ply their fingers busily while they are employed with you. As regards the stay which the Mission should make at the Capital, stay as long as your stay is profitable. I readily trust to you not to exceed that time.

Presents will probably be given to the officers of the mission. They cannot of course retain them, according to the rules of the Service. But make your people keep the present offered to each person separate. If the service should be satisfactorily and successfully performed, I will endeavour to persuade the Government to permit each officer to retain something in memory of the duty on which he has been employed. I shall

look with great interest to the proceedings of your Embassy and I heartily wish you all good luck.

Always yours sincerely,
DALHOUSIE.

¹ *Vide supra*, Letter No. 210, note 2. This was the second part of the instructions issued to Phayre as Envoy. The Governor-General's minute was dated 3 July 1855. Phayre was instructed that after informing the Hlutdaw of the intended dispatch of the Mission, it was not to proceed beyond the British frontier until he was satisfied that the Court of Ava had taken proper measures for its reception. He was to exercise the greatest care in selecting the men for the European guard. 'The men, both soldiers and sailors, should be informed from the Governor-General that he expects that their conduct, while employed in this Mission, in respect of orderly behaviour, sobriety and civility to the people of the country, will be such as shall do credit to the two services and to the British name.' Detailed instructions were included as to the deference to be shown to the King and consideration for Burmese customs; but it was laid down that in general no mark of deference should be conceded, which had not been conceded by previous envoys, copies of whose proceedings were enclosed for Phayre's guidance.

The Envoy's chief endeavours were to be exercised in persuading the King to make a formal treaty.

'At first,' ran the minute, 'it was required that the King should formally cede to the British Government the provinces of which they had taken possession by force of arms. Subsequently, when the King's determination never to make a formal cession of this large portion of his hereditary dominions had become certain, and when our firmer hold of the province of Pegu had rendered the Government less solicitous regarding a cession, that obnoxious provision was omitted from the draft which was proposed for submission to the King. An indirect recognition only of our possession of the conquered provinces was then inserted. And so willing was the Government to conciliate the King, that it even entertained a proposal for restoring to him the district of Mengdoon, (a personal appanage which he was desirous of regaining,) on the sole condition of his concluding the Treaty in its modified form. The suggestion of restoring Mengdoon was approved by the Honble. the Secret Committee.

'But the position of affairs has much changed since these proposals were made.

'The Court of Ava was informed during last year that the question regarding Mengdoon could not be kept open indefinitely, and that it would not be any longer entertained unless it were brought forward formally before the close of the year.

'In the autumn the King sent Envoys to the Governor General, but

they were not authorized to make any conditional proposal for the restoration of Mengdoon. On the contrary they solicited the unconditional restoration of the whole of the provinces which had been conquered from the Burman sovereignty. It is not known whether the Envoys were empowered by the King to make such a request or not. But however that might be, the strange and lofty expectations which were expressed by the Envoys rendered it necessary that the Governor General should reply to their request by a decided and peremptory and final refusal; so as to distinguish once for all the hopes they still appeared to entertain and to put an end to the uncertainty in which the Court of Ava would still continue so long as those hopes were, even in the faintest degree, permitted to exist. The Governor General, therefore, emphatically declared to the Envoys that the provinces in the possession of the British Government would never be restored to the King of Ava, now or at any future time.

'This declaration, and the absence of all application by the King for the recovery of Mengdoon either before or since, render it impossible that the Government should now restore that district, without doing an injury to our own authority, and committing an injustice towards the inhabitants of Mengdoon, who have shown themselves to be among the quietest and best disposed of our people in Pegu.'

It was unnecessary, therefore, to press for a treaty of cession; all that need now be sought was a simple Treaty of Amity with a trading clause added to it granting to the subjects of each the right to trade without impediment within the territories of the other. In the draft of the proposed treaty, a copy of which was annexed, there were two articles only; one providing for perpetual peace and friendship between the two powers, the other conferring the right of trading in security in both countries upon the subjects of each respectively. The suggested treaty was no guarantee, wrote Lord Dalhousie, but it was desirable, because the Home Authorities were anxious for one to be made, and because it would place British relations within the Court of Ava on a settled and recognized basis in the sight of other nations. No concession, however, was to be made in order to persuade the King to sign; certainly not the removal of frontier duties, as had been suggested. These were so light as to be no impediment to trade, and yet produced 'an amount of revenue which Government cannot forego'. In arguing with the King for a Treaty it should be pointed out that both the Ameer of Cabul and the King of Siam had recently concluded similar treaties of amity with the Government of India, and that a treaty would render it possible for the Government of India to permit the passage of sulphur and warlike stores into Burma, the annual admission of ministers to present royal gifts to pagodas in Pegu, and free passage to steamboats employed by the King on the Irrawaddy.

In conclusion the Envoy was requested to write officially to Government at least once a week during the continuance of his Mission, and was reminded that at its termination Government would expect to

receive a full report of its proceedings and a clear digest of the information collected by the various gentlemen attached to the Mission.

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Private. Kotighery, July 3rd, 1855.

My dear Phayre,

I have written to you today regarding your mission to Ava demiofficially in a separate letter. I trouble you now with a few lines on my private objects in connexion with it.

I should like to have a portrait of the King and of the Eng she meng. You will be able to find out whether you can make the request with propriety. If you can, I should be glad if you would solicit each of them from me to sit for their portrait to Mr. Grant.

I would, if I dared, ask the erudite Queen also. I leave the propriety of doing so to you. I enclose a note for Mr. Grant, who will be attached to your mission, giving him the commission to execute these portraits on your informing him that he might do so.

Any real curiosities you can pick up for me will be very welcome.

Yours sincerely,
DALHOUSIE.

218

Private. Kotieghery, July 4th, 1855.

My dear Phayre,

I add a few words to the letter which I wrote yesterday regarding your mission, in order to draw your attention to the letter addressed to the King.¹

You will perceive that no direct allusion has been made in it to the treaty which you have been told to negotiate, though the general language it contains may be applied to the Treaty by those who are aware of the whole tenor of the instructions. I have done so purposely because I conceive that if the King has obstinately resolved to sign nothing, his refusal to do a specific act, which the Governor General requests him in his letter to do, would be more embarrassing—and the failure of the Mission would in such case be more conspicuous—than if the Draft

Treaty were left in the hands of the Envoy without any special mention made of the instrument by the G.G.

You will see also that the King is invited to place all reliance on the sentiments you will express. In explanation of this phrase I wish to say that in your character of Envoy you will be warranted in expressing to the King, *as a direct message from the Governor General*, any sentiment which, your instructions inform you, is entertained by the Government, even tho' it is not put in the form of a direct message in the instructions.

I think I have nothing more to say on this subject; and I will only add my hope that you will enjoy that half mango, which Father Abbona says the King always keeps for you while he eats the other half his royal self.

Yours sincerely,
DALHOUSIE.

¹ *I.S.P.*, Cons. 27 July 1855, No. 29. A purely formal document; it is unnecessary to reproduce it here.

219

Private. Kotieghery, July 5th, 1855.

My dear Phayre,

Today I have received your letter of June 16th enclosing two from Mr. Spears of 28th May and 5th June. All that is contained in them is satisfactory. Your leaving the steamers at Melloon, or anywhere else as long as there is water to float them, is quite out of the question. No proposal to that effect either could have been, or can be, listened to.

The returns you send me are excellent in themselves and still more excellent in promise. The estimate for the cut into the Bassein river is rather heavy, tho' I dare say well worthy of adoption; but in these days of revived Five per Cents the sum total is felt to be of more consequence than it seemed to be a year and a half ago.

I am sincerely sorry to hear of Major Fytche's illness, and still hope that he will not be obliged to go away. On other subjects I have written to you so lately and so fully that I have nothing now to add.

Believe me, sincerely yours,
DALHOUSIE.

220

Private. Kotieghery, July 7th, 1855.

My dear Phayre,

It has occurred to me that you may possibly infer from some expressions in your instructions that I am not solicitous as to obtaining a Treaty. Whatever my own opinions may be as to the value of such an instrument, I am aware that others set great store by it. I wish therefore to explain to you that, while no blame will be attached to you if you should fail, I am most anxious that you should succeed; and I beg you to strain every nerve to obtain even a simple Treaty of Amity if nothing more can be got.

Yours sincerely,
DALHOUSIE.

221

Rangoon, July 4th, 1855.

My Lord,

I received your Lordship's letter of the 26th May by Sesostris on the 26th of June. I am conscious, my Lord, that I am not without blame in the matter of the Posts. I only hope that when my explanation arrives,¹ I may not appear so blameworthy as at present. The immediate cause of delay in the Police Posts was non arrival of the arms for the men. I certainly should have seen closer to that; but as all previous indents had been complied with direct, I only discovered this want on my arrival at Prome en route to Toungoo. But I do not attempt, my Lord, to exonerate myself—I acknowledge I am much to blame—all I can say is I hope it will appear less so than it does at present.

I beg to enclose copy of a letter from Mr. Spears dated the 14th June. While writing I have received another dated the 25th. I have forwarded a copy on to Mr. Dorin, and as it is late, I have requested him to send it on to your Lordship. The King wishes me still to go up in the boats he means to send for me. I am very much perplexed in this matter as he seems to regard my compliance as necessary, in order to show a proper appreciation of his attention. I may, therefore, be obliged to go myself into one of the boats, but men of the Escort must for their own comfort remain on board the steamer.

With reference to Mr. Armitage's remarks,² the point of land he speaks of on Negrais Island is undoubtedly *of itself* the best place for a Custom House. But there is not room in its immediate vicinity for a population: that is to say, Dr. Forsyth and I went over the ground, and he considered a great portion of it not likely to be healthy. Mr. Armitage's proposition for having canals as drains is certainly worthy of investigation. But whether the Custom House (i.e. the Port) should be on the Island or on the main land (below the city) will depend also on whether the mud bank extends so low down as Mr. Armitage supposes.

Dr. Forsyth still considers Negrais Island not a desirable locality on account of its probable unhealthiness for the greater portion of the population. This question shall, however, be investigated. The site for a Custom House had, in fact, been left as an open question although the Point on the main land below the city was considered the best place for it.

I am much pained my Lord to think that you should have cause for displeasure—in fact more than I can express. I am, My Lord,

With much respect your obedient servant,

A. P. PHAYRE.

¹ Phayre's official letter of explanation was dated 17 July 1855; *vide I.S.P.*, Cons. 28 Sept. 1855, No. 10.

² *Vide* Letter No. 199.

222

Amarapoora, 14th June, 1855.

My dear Major Phayre,

Since writing you on the 5th there has been no change here, except in the weather, which, from the monsoon having now regularly set in accompanied with frequent showers, is now delightfully cool.

D'Orgony arrived here on the 5th, and has since then seen the Woongees, the Prince, and His Majesty, the latter the day before yesterday. *In his own name* he made presents of some value to the whole of them, amongst other things a dozen very beautiful carpets of French manufacture. D'Orgony does not give himself out to be an authorized Agent of the French Government, but he has told Father A. that he is their correspondent, and that his

expenses are paid by them. The other day I met him in Mr. [blank] house, when he told me that his principal object in coming up here was to try and get the King to enter into a contract to supply the French Government with a large quantity of timber at Rangoon prices. That he wished to get the King to enter into a contract for timber is perfectly true, but whether on account of Government or some private company is not so certain. Both the Prince and King put many questions to him as to the present aspect of affairs in Europe, and in particular about the state of things in the Crimea [sic], he having told them that he had visited Sebastapol by permission of the Emperor of the French. The account he has given of the progress of the Allies is not very flattering, particularly of the British Army, which he represents to be worn down to a mere handful of men by hard work, the want of food, and clothing (the French having to supply them with the latter), so that if it were not for the assistance of the French, the Russians might come out any day, and with brooms sweep them all into the sea. As for the Cavalry, he says that all he saw of it was four more than half starved horses. The King, of course, does not believe all that the *General* relates, and I think upon the whole his presence up here will do no harm. It will puzzle him with all his cleverness (if so inclined) to represent the state of affairs of the British Government to be in a worse state, than has been done by certain parties here for more than a year past. D'Orgony has only seen the King and Prince once; from the former he got 1000 Ticals and a pony as a return present, from the latter as yet nothing.

Yesterday morning a boat from Jordan & Co. Rangoon arrived with durians and mangostans for the King. They were not quite nine days on the road, so that a considerable quantity of the fruit have come to hand in good order. The durians were put up each separately in a small bamboo basket (chen), and packed in such a way as to allow the air to get at them, no cloth or any other covering being used.

The day before yesterday Mr. Lewis of Gladston Wyllie & Co. arrived here, but as he has been longer on the road than the last dawk boat, we have no particular news of him.

Have you found the King's marble pagoda yet? A person named Mong Tsine, at present in Pegu purchasing rice for the

King, was the man who took it down. Mr. Edwards would have no difficulty in finding him out.

I am and remain yours very faithfully,

THOMAS SPEARS.

P.S. Should you be in Rangoon when you receive this, a[s] Mr. Barlas has gone on to Calcutta, will you kindly pay to Mr. Robinson my salary bill for October, November and December of 1854, also the dawk boat bills for the same period, as likewise what is due for the Governor-General[s] pagoda and the chessmen.

THOMAS SPEARS.

Mr. Robinson is Mr. Barlas' Agent.

P.S. As I was enclosing the packet, Marker David, a man of the Prince's, sent me a small parcel and letter to your address. The former smells very much of sulphur, so I rather suspect they want you to believe they have found a mine of that article.

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Amarapoora, 25th June, 1855.

My dear Major Phayre,

On the 19th I had the pleasure of receiving your letter of the 23d ultimo, and before giving you the news of the place will answer you different queries.

Every facility will be offered you for examining the Yaenan Wells,¹ and the fossil bone deposit on your way up, whether you come by the King's boats or your own steamers. The King says you can remain for any number of days at those places you think proper.

Although I have made inquiries as to whether Mr. Oldham will be allowed to go about and examine the formation of the country on his arrival here, as yet I have not been able to ascertain whether he will be able to do so or not; but I think that it is very likely the King will take advantage of his presence here to get him to examine some of the lead and copper mines. I have told His Majesty that you are bringing up a gentleman skilled in all sorts of stones.

The King will be very happy to see the artist, and if the process

of taking a likeness does not take up too much time it is not unlikely that he may allow his portrait to be taken, but of this I am not certain. At all events he will take no offence at your asking him to sit for his likeness.

I do not think you will be able to get any slaughter cattle either here or down the river. The King could not consistently give you liberty to purchase, and none of his people would dare to supply you with any. As it can be of little consequence whether you get beef or not for the short time you will be here, it will be better, I think, to respect the prejudices of the King on this head. Your European Guard will be supplied with pork, fowls, goat flesh, &c., &c. in any quantity at the King's expense.

There will be room enough in the houses built for you here for double the number of people you are bringing up with you.

Boats are being prepared for the purpose of being sent down to meet you; seven large pouns, with (20) twenty war boats to take them in tow. From Maloon to the capital I am told that at intervals of four tains bamboo house are being erected for your accomodation, so that you may be enabled to stop with comfort at any particular spot for a day or two. The Woondawk, that went to Calcutta with some other Lootdaw officers, will meet you at Maloon. But they will not leave this until you write the Lootdaw or Woongyee, stating the time you may be expected there. The Myet Tseen Woon Mong To will also be sent to Pagan, as likewise a number of other people who have charge of districts on the river side, so that every attention may be paid you on your passage up. In my last I told you that the King would like you to embark in his boats at Maloon. Since then I have told him what you have said about coming up with two steamers. He says that he will make no objections to your doing so, but at the same time hopes that you will reconsider the matter and allow him the honor of conveying you to the capital on his own boats. By your doing so, he says, you will oblige him, and he will be able to shew you more attention on the road, and during your stay here, than he could possibly do in the event of your coming up in the steamers. Should you consent to come up in the King's boats, I do not think you will have any cause to regret having done so. His Majesty also said that at any subsequent time you may wish to visit the capital he will not have the least objections to your

coming up in your own steamers, but that after all the attention you had shewn his envoy on the passage to and from Calcutta, if he were not allowed to return the compliment, it would not look well.

D'Orgoni went to the Palace in plain clothes; what you have told me of him I have let Mr. Camaretta know, so as to put him on his guard. His object up here just now, I believe, is to get a contract for timber. But in this business I have not heard that he has made any progress as yet. The Burmans call him *Bo Gee*² but nothing more.

Father Abbona has been confined to the house for the last fortnight by some large boils on his chest. He is a little better now, but cannot go about yet.

Mr. Lewis proceeds on to the Burman part of Toungoo to take possession of some timber Gladstone Wylie & Co. purchased from the King. He goes over land, and will have a guard of twenty Musketeers; he expects to leave this in a few days.

By the last dawk boat an Armenian sent a parcel of sulphur and a letter to your address. I thought at one time that it would be better not to send it without letting the King know; but then, as the packet was just closing, the boat would have required to be detained a day for that, so I let it go. But next day I mentioned it to the king, who at once gave Mr. Camaretta orders to inquire into the nature of the communication. My reasons for doing this was that I was afraid that something offensive might be in the letter, and that, from the Armenian being a man of the Prince's, you might have thought it came from him. On being questioned he gave the purport of his letter, and stated that he has not been advised to write it by any one. The King is very angry with him and has threatened to punish him severely, if he transgressed in the same way again. He has been forbidden to come to the Palace.

Rice is getting up in price. Pegu cargo is now selling in the boats at 120 Ticals Ywetnee @ 100 baskets, and likely to be higher.

And I remain, yours sincerely,

THOMAS SPEARS.

¹ The oil workings at Yenangaung.

² Bo = officer, leader (often applied in those days to Europeans in Burma or dacoit leaders). *Gee* (*gyi*, modern spelling) = great.

224

Private. Coonoor, July 26th, 1855.

My dear Phayre,

I have received today your letter of July 4th and am much obliged for it and copies of Mr. Spears'. In the instructions, which were sent you, I insisted on the necessity of the steamers, which conveyed you, going up to Amerapoora. But I should not consider the expedient, which you suggest in your letter, of going into the King's boats yourself and proceeding thus *accompanied by the steamers*, as being open to objection. The steamers must go for several reasons.

D'Orgony has not gone the length of accrediting himself from the Emperor to the King of Ava. But you are in a condition to deny that he is in any way authorised by the French Government.

What does the name 'Bogee' (which, Mr. Spears says, the Burmans give him) import?

I shall pay every attention to what you may represent officially regarding the frontier posts. I should be very sorry to find I had done you any injustice even temporarily and unintentionally. It is of great consequence that in determining this site on the Bassein river, we should both make sure as far as possible of having selected the best, and that we should carry the commercial interest with us. I propose to take some further measures for this purpose—with which I need not trouble you now, but which will await your consideration on your return from Ava.

You have got a capital Secretary sent to you¹—and altogether your party is so agreeable a one, and your mission so interesting, that I have often wished I could myself go as a counterfeit attaché. Believe me to be,

Yours sincerely,
DALHOUSIE.

¹ Yule. *Vide* Letter No. 213, note 1.

225

Rangoon, July 17th.

My Lord,

I received your Lordship's letter of the 15th June on the 10th inst. I am now awaiting your final instructions regarding the Mission.¹ I do hope, my Lord, that the neglect of mine regarding the Police Posts will not injure me in your opinion.

I have heard from Mr. Oldham who has been to inspect the coal mine at Thayet Myo. He says 'the bed worth working is from 4 to 5 feet thick. It will be worth working, but not a very brilliant prospect.'

Regarding the estimate of the Accountant being 23 lacs, I have no doubt he includes therein the price of land sold in the town of Rangoon, which I have omitted, as not being an item of regular revenue.

By this mail I am sending to Calcutta Major Fytche's proposition and plans regarding the city and Port of Dalhousie. He recommends the Custom House being placed, as Mr. Armitage did, on the N.E. point of Negrais Island. That, no doubt, is the best place, if space can be found for not only warehouses but for the thousands of work people required about the places of business in a sea port. Major Fytche does not positively uphold Mr. Armitage's plan of a kind of Venice city on Negrais; yet without this the plan is scarcely feasible. Dr. Forsyth still says it will be unhealthy. I have recommended that the Custom House be temporarily placed on the site of Negrais Island, as nothing but experience can show whether merchants will find it convenient, and as regards the canals it would not be safe to decide on them until an engineer of experience has inspected the locality. The present engineer officer there, Lieut. Edgcomb, is very young in the service.

I have put in hand a model building (Tatshoung) of carved wood, which will be on the scale of 1 inch to the foot, or 50 inches high.

I hope your Lordship will be able to take one more look at Rangoon. I enclose copy of a letter from Mr. Spears of the 5th inst. The reply, which, he states, the King was anxiously looking for from me, was to the letter of theirs, which reached me on the 16th June. My reply must have reached them a day or

two after the dispatch of Mr. Spears' letter. He speaks of rhubarb received at Ava. I have sent a specimen of it to Mr. Beadon.

I am glad to hear that your Lordship's health is gradually improving. I am, My Lord,

with much respect your obedient servant,

A. P. PHAYRE.

¹ *Vide* Letter No. 216, note 1.

226

Amarapoora, 5 July, 1855.

My dear Major Phayre,

It is now just one month since the Woongyee wrote you about Mong Bo's business, and as the dawk boat which will arrive in all probability in the course of a day or two is likely to bring him an answer, it is looked for with no small degree of interest by all here, His Majesty inclusive. In fact I seldom see the King without being asked when an answer may be expected.

D'Orgoni I see at times, and from what he says I do not think he finds his position here so good as he expected. He tells me he is authorised by the French minister of marine to enter into a contract with the Burman Government for timber to the extent of twelve million francs, a portion of the money to be paid as soon as the agreement is signed; but in this business he had not as yet made much progress. From all I have learnt, I do not think that D'Orgoni will leave Amarapoora for the next six months, if even then. But this, of course, will depend upon how he is able to get on. He has a letter of credit with him from Jordan for 6000 Rupees.

Mr. Camaretta tells me to [*sic*] D'O has applied for leave to take a trip into the country on your arrival here. Perhaps he is afraid you may dispute his right to the rank of *General*.

Mong Shoay Moug, formerly Governor of Kyangaen, and for some time past Governor of Tsalane, lost his situation the other day from harbouring and refusing to give up some robbers, that had been committing depredations in the district of Maloon. He is now here.

I now send a specimen of China rhubarb, which I mentioned

to you some time ago had been brought from Taleefow by a Native Christian. Father Abbano bought up the whole batch, 50 Viss, at 3 Ticals a Viss. It acts as a purgant the same as other China rhubarb, but I do not think it is so strong. In Europe and India rhubarb is very scarce now. In Calcutta you have to pay eight rupees for about 12 Ticals weight, so that this, even if it is of an inferior quality, provided it is wholesome, may command a good price. The root can be had, it is said, in any quantity at Talefow.

A week ago two young elephants, caught a considerable distance up the river, arrived here and were received with great state. They were said to be white, but for my own part with the exception of the eyes they appeared to me to be as black as any ordinary elephants. The Prince went up the river to Maengoon to meet them. And the next day on their arrival they were conducted to the Palace preceeded by strong dancing parties of both men and women, singing and cutting all sorts of antics. Each elephant had a white canopy carried over it, and being rather wild was fastened with strong ropes to two very large tame elephants, who at times corrected their charges, when they showed a disposition to be restive under the honors paid to them. Arrived at the Palace they were received there in fine style. They entered by the East gate preceeded by the Oung Ma Woon, a man upwards of eighty years, dancing and singing away with the best of them. On the ground before the Palace facing the East gate were spread mats on which the Prince, Woongyees, Atwenwoons, and others, who are admitted to the Palace, were seated. Far above in the front of the Mae Nan¹ was the King, Queen and Queen's Mother with all the King's children and their attendants. The space between the Palace and the gate was entirely occupied with bands of dancing girls moving to *sweet* music. While at the same time plays were being acted by other parties to music of their own, varied by jugglers shewing off their skill in various ways,—some playing with knives, one standing on his head at the top of a pole, and another twirling round on the point of a high bamboo resting on his stomach with his feet and arms stretched out, for all the world as if he intended to drill a hole through his body; and, as if that were not enough, another lies down with his bare back on the points of

many spears placed upright in the ground, whilst another man gets on top of him and stands there heels up.

As the elephants entered and were being conducted to their places of abode, jugglers, dancers, musicians and all the rest struck out into double quick time for about a quarter of an hour, when the King finished the ceremony by causing presents to be liberally distributed to those concerned in getting up the show.

We are now in Burman lent, and the people here great and small make it their principal business to try who will pay most attention to the Poongees, as this pleases the King. Everything quiet here, and trusting I may soon have the pleasure of hearing from you, I remain,

yours sincerely,
THOMAS SPEARS.

¹ Mae Nan = Earthen palace.

227

Private. Kotieghery, August 13th, 1855.

My dear Phayre,

I have had the pleasure of receiving your letter of 17th July.

In reply to one sentence in it I have only to say, that while I think, of course, that you made a mistake in omitting to carry into effect the instructions of the General regarding frontier police, I am too sensible from my own experience how easy it is to make mistakes, to allow this one to injure you in my estimation.

You are now no doubt speeding on your way to the Golden foot—a most interesting employment, and one which, I hope, will be successful in all respects. Professor Oldham's judgment on the coal at Thayet myo is sufficiently favorable to encourage us to proceed. I shall be very glad if he is allowed to take a look at the Ava coal, while he is at the capital with you.

Mr. Armitage has rather thrown a shell among us at Bassein. The opinions, which you all expressed after a double examination, were very strong, and they appeared to me to be well founded. On the other hand Mr. Armitage's opinions are equally strong. He has given proof of the strength and sincerity of his convictions by taking a grant of land on the island. And

he is a very shrewd and practical man. The question is a very important one for the success of the new settlement, and it ought to be thoroughly considered. I have proposed that, before we finally decide, there should be another examination of the site by government officers, assisted by one or two commercial gentlemen and if possible by Mr. Armitage himself. With reference to your remark regarding the business, a more experienced opinion would also be desirable.

I still entertain the hope and the intention of seeing Rangoon once again. Always, my dear Phayre,

Yours sincerely,
DALHOUSIE.

228

Rangoon, July 31st, 1855.

My Lord,

I have received your Lordship's letters of the 30th June, two of the 3d and one of the 4th of July.

The instructions conveyed are so complete that I could desire nothing more, and they shall be faithfully obeyed. I trust I shall be able to persuade the King to conclude a treaty, but it is quite impossible to calculate beforehand how a Burmese will receive any proposition. Be assured, however, My Lord, that I will do my utmost to procure such a treaty as has been directed.

I feel assured that with the help of the members of the Mission I shall be able to collect a mass of valuable information, and with Captain Yule as secretary, I feel assured it will be well put together.

I shall be particularly cautious in my behaviour towards the Eng shé meng so as not to excite the jealousy of the King. I have not received the scientific instruments for the Queen, but Captain Rennie has a sextant and false horizon; with that and the telescope I think we shall be able to satisfy Her Majesty.

I will be careful to observe your Lordship's directions regarding the ceremonies of reception, and also relative to the conduct of the men of the Escort, as also of the members of the mission in the matter of dress. I believe that some present given to Father Abbona for his school will be very acceptable, and I shall take the opportunity of doing so.

I shall be careful to make the King and Lootdaw understand

the position of D'Orgoni. Mr. Spears says that he will avoid being in Ava at the time the mission arrives.

We go on board the steamers tonight and leave early in the morning. I shall write as often as possible. I have made arrangements for boats to come up once a week to us from Prome.

I will not fail to pick up anything, which I think will be acceptable to your Lordship. Mr. Grant has been using his pencil while here, and has today taken a very good likeness of Bundoolah.

Your Lordship will probably have received by this time all the papers regarding the settlement of Dalhousie. The position for the Custom House can, I think, only be satisfactorily settled by actual experience, for opinion is a good deal divided on the subject.

I enclose a letter for your Lordship from Mr. Grant the artist, and am, My Lord,

with much respect your obedient servant,

A. P. PHAYRE.

229

Private. Kotieghery, August 25/55.

My dear Phayre,

Yesterday I received yours of 31st July. It rejoiced me to hear of the mission having set off in such complete preparation and in all respects well appointed. I am very sure indeed, as I have said before, that if you do not bring a Treaty back with you, it will not be from any fault of yours. I have requested Captain Rennie, if your stay should be protracted, as I think it very probably may be, to come down the river before you, so as to be able to leave Calcutta for me about 15th October.

If I can manage to reach Rangoon at all, it will be in November. But I will, of course, let you know more nearly the day of the month so soon as my plans are fixed. It is useless to attempt forming them so long beforehand.

Success to you. My salaam to Brigadier John Forsyth—and good wishes to all who are with you.

Always yours sincerely,
DALHOUSIE.

230

Private. Neilgherries, August 28th, 1855.

My dear Phayre,

The President in Council has forwarded to me Mr. Spears' letter to you dated 15th July, which I return. As the mission will probably be late in its return, I have asked Captain Rennie to precede it, so as to be able to leave Calcutta with his ship for me by 15th October. Will you be so good as to facilitate his movements for this purpose? You will have heard that my successor is to be Lord Canning. I shall endeavour to instil into him a special interest in the progress of Pegu, before I quit India.

My plan of visiting Rangoon still holds; but I am slave to events, and may be prevented.

Yours sincerely,
DALHOUSIE.

231

Prome, August 7th, 1855.

My Lord,

We have arrived thus far on our way up the river. On the way I received a letter from Mr. Spears dated the 28th ulto., a copy of which is enclosed. The Woongyee only then received a letter of mine dated the 28th of June announcing the probable date of my departure. The letter had been much longer on the way than I anticipated, and the Burmese appear to be anxious, lest in the short time given they should not be able to have everything ready to receive the Mission in due form. I beg to enclose copies of Mr. Spears' letters dated 25th and 28th of July.

Mr. Grant has been making good use of his time all the way up, and has some excellent sketches. He is taking the likeness today of two women of the Khyen (Chin) tribe with tattooed faces. Captain Tripe¹ has also been exercising his art on the buildings, &c. in Prome.

Tomorrow we leave this for Thayet Myo, and on the frontier I shall address the men of the escort as directed by your Lordship.

I fear Captain Rennie will have great difficulty in making any

survey of the river at this season. The stream is so rapid that a boat is immediately carried down, and it is impossible to distinguish how the channels would run in the dry season. Latitudes and longitudes can be taken and many points of interest fixed.

Mr. Oldham is up at Thayet Myo. I am very sorry to say that he considers the coal seam will not be worth working, in fact they have, as I understand, already come to the end of it. This is a blow I did not expect, but we must hope to be able to find a better deposit elsewhere. It will now be of greater importance than before that Mr. Oldham should visit the Ava coal mine.

We have the weather very pleasant—not so much rain as at Rangoon, but yet quite cool. I hope to be able to give your Lordship a satisfactory account of the Mission. I feel the highest confidence in everyone associated with me and trust I shall be successful as regards the treaty. I am, My Lord,
with much respect your obedient servant,

A. P. PHAYRE.

¹ In compliance with a recommendation made by the Court of Directors that photography should be used to preserve the recollection of buildings and other objects of interest in Burma, Lord Dalhousie had selected Captain Linnaeus Tripe of the 12th Madras N.I. for this work. His magnificent collection of photographs, taken while with the mission, is now difficult to obtain. University College, Rangoon, has in its possession a complete set, kindly presented by Sir Robert Giles, a past Vice-Chancellor of the University of Rangoon.

232

Amarapoora, 25 July 1855.

My dear Major Phayre,

I had last the pleasure of addressing you on the 15th by the Burman dawk boat. Things here are pretty much as they were then, the Lootdaw only awaiting your official letter to send down people to meet you.

A very ridiculous [*sic*] affair took place the other day at a village a few miles distant from this. A Zogee—a holy man—a Mahomedan, under the influence of 'bang' had given out that he was possessed with the power of working miracles, and that he could live for any length of time without taking food of any kind.

Numbers of the native Mussulmen population went to see him, which, it is supposed, acting upon his vanity, caused him to declare that he was destined to be the King of Burmah. This a few poor people were foolish enough to believe, and remained with him. A soothsayer, one of his followers, supposed not to be altogether sane, was told to find out the propitious day for commencing operations, and also the place where the rising should take place, in order to ensure success. The Mussulmen village Maedoo was pointed out as the lucky spot, and that they should leave for it at once. But at this stage of the business news having reached the authorities here of what was going on, people were sent out after the Zogee and his followers, and they were the next day all brought in prisoners. I have heard the only opposition met with was from a one-legged Dhoby,¹ who, shouldering his crutch managed to knock down two or three of the King's people before he was secured. A number of people were arrested and kept in confinement for a day or two, but it is only the Zogee and some of his immediate followers that are now in jail. No lives have been taken.

The *Thebomaantha* leaves soon for Monae, but does not take any men with him—the force that was stationed there, I am told on very good authority, has been much reduced.

D'Orgoni will remain here, his request to be allowed to take a trip to Burma, until you leave, having been refused. *He says* that the King gave as his reasons for not allowing him to go, that he wished him to be at hand in case he wished to consult with him. D'Orgoni wishes people to believe that he has great influence with His Majesty, but it is all fudge. However this may be, I have no doubt he will try to edge himself in between you and the King, and if repulsed, as I have no doubt he will be, he will then do his best to frustrate any arrangements, political or commercial, you may try to enter into with His Majesty. Remember that I do not say that he *can do this*, but merely that he will try his best. D'Orgoni not being able to speak a word of the language, labours under great disadvantage. D'Orgoni has seen the King twice since I wrote.

By people lately arrived from Maloon I am told that Mr. Maketich, Woon of that place, has a good supply of fire wood ready for you. Orders have also been sent to him from this, that

if by any mistake you should come up before the letter announcing the time of your departure comes to hand, to receive you in the best way he can. I trust, however, that your letter will be here in time to allow the officers sent from this to meet you there.

We have had less rain this year than usual. Cargo rice in the boat, 130 ticals Yewtnee a 100 baskets, with every prospects of rising higher. Everything very quiet, and I remain,

yours sincerely,

THOMAS SPEARS.

¹ Indian washerman.

233

Amarapoorra, 28 July 1855.

My dear Major Phayre,

Today at 11 a.m. the Burman dawk boat came in, by which I had the pleasure of receiving your letters of the 28th June and 6th instant. The letter for the Woongyee (of 28 June) by the same boat could only be delivered in the evening owing to the funeral of one of the Queens—a half-sister of the King's—taking place today.

As mentioned by me in a previous letter, the boats and people, to be sent down to meet you, would only leave this on receipt of your letter stating the time you might be expected at Maloon. So that you may conceive your letter rather put them out, as by it you ought to be at Maloon in a day or two at furthest, and nothing as yet has been done to receive you there in the way the King wishes. However, a fast boat starts off early tomorrow morning (by which I now write) with orders to all the towns on the river side to be prepared to supply you with whatever may be required, fuel for the steamers amongst other things; and in four days more the Woondaw and some other Lootdaw officers will leave with the war boats and pouns to welcome you to the country.

Today I have explained to the King the impossibility of your bringing up the presents in boats: he is quite satisfied with what I have said, and has now not the least objections to the steamers coming up all the way to the capital. You can make use of the boats only when you find it convenient, but I think you should

make a point of doing so at times. The same number of boats will not be sent now as was at first intended.

I believe there will be room sufficient at the 'Residency' for all you are bringing up with you. I saw your note to the Maloon Woon (Mackertich) wherein you state you may be expected there on the 1st August. If that is the case, the boat may be down there by the time you arrive.

From the short warning the Burmese have received, I am afraid there will be hardly time for them to get the bamboo houses ready for you to land at the different places on the road up, but I think you may depend on every attention being paid. You can remain at the Yaenan Wells, or any other part, for any length of time you think proper.

By the Woon dawk boat I will do myself the pleasure of writing you again, so pray excuse me for the present. My thanks for the names of the different gentlemen that are coming up with you, which you have been so good as to give me. And I remain,

yours sincerely,
THOMAS SPEARS.

P.S. I had the pleasure of writing you by the dawk boat under cover to Captain Ardagh on the 25th Instt:

234

Kotieghery, Sept. 10th, 1855.

My dear Phayre,

I have to thank you for your letter of August 7th with enclosures from Mr. Spears. I have nothing to tell you, but I send a line by the Sesostris to say your letter has reached me. By the same ship you will also receive an official dispatch by which it is intimated to you that Louis Napoleon throws overboard M. d'Orgoni very summarily. Of course, if the river will not admit of soundings, Captain Rennie will not be to blame for not getting them. Your report of the coal at Thayet myo is 'a heavy blow and great discouragement'. Mines at Ava will never stand us in as good stead as mines on our own ground.

Yours sincerely,
DALHOUSIE.

235

Pa-gan Myo, August 21st, 1855.

My Lord,

We arrived here yesterday being about 140 miles beyond our frontier. Hitherto we have received the utmost civility from every Burmese official—in fact they have done a great deal more than could have been expected to make the journey agreeable. At Maloon we met the *Woondouk* of the Mission to Calcutta with some golden war boats, and from thence Mr. Makertish also accompanied us. At every place we have come to we have been told that if we wished to go about with guides, there were guides ready; if without them, we could do so. We have availed ourselves of this frankness, and have gone about as we felt inclined. At the well known petroleum wells which are about 60 miles below this we remained two days examining the country, and inquiring into the produce of the wells.¹ We collected there also a number of fossil bones, and Mr. Oldham will, I have no doubt, have an interesting geological account of the country. This place was formerly the capital of one of the ancient divisions of the Empire. The Pagodas—ruined and in repair—amount to several hundreds. Some few of them are really fine structures, different from the modern Pagodas, inasmuch as they have steps and galleries leading to near the top of them, from whence a fine view is obtained of the surrounding country. Captain Tripe and Mr. Grant are actively engaged in exercising their art, and I believe not a single fine building or view has escaped them.

I beg to enclose three letters from Mr. Spears dated the 3d and 13th and 15th inst.² Your Lordship will notice that two officers of H.M. 29th Regt. went up to Ava and were received by the King. They went entirely on their own responsibility, having received leave between musters in the usual manner.³

As there is a great deal to see here and for the artists to draw, we purpose remaining until tomorrow evening. The country for the last 60 or 70 miles is like a parched up desert. There has been little or no rain for several years past, and the crops have amounted to little or nothing. This year nothing has been sown as yet, and even in favourable years there cannot be any land

well suited for rice, at least near the river banks. There is some further inland, I am informed. But it is evident all this country we have passed through must be dependent on the delta for rice. The collections at the Thayet Myo Custom House amounted to 40,000 Rs. in July. That includes the imports as well as the exports.

Mr. Makertich, the Armenian, who is collector of customs at Men-hla (near Maloon) has now with him 20,000 Rs. the amount of duty collections for the last five months.

I have, while on the way up, frequently contrasted the studied civility, with which we are received, with the insolent manner in which former Envoys were treated. The Governor of Pagan, for instance, who is, I believe, a favourite with the King, met us about 5 or 6 miles below the city, came on board the steamer and was profuse in his offers of assistance in any way.

I have not been able to see all the Pagodas here, but have visited the best of them. There are a good many stone inscriptions but none ancient, as far as I have seen, and the old ones, I am informed, were taken to Ava some years ago to preserve them.⁴

The weather has been very pleasant and no one has suffered in health. The men have all behaved very well. Near the frontier I addressed a few words to them, as directed by your Lordship, on the necessity of their behaving well in the Burmese territory. The Commanding Officer of the 29th Regt. at Thayet Myo, was so urgent on me to accept a few of the men of his band, that I took 15 of them, and they are a great addition to our party. They generally play on the bank of an evening.

The King evidently does not want the steamer to come up to the city. They suppose, I believe, that his dignity would be lowered in the eyes of his subjects at seeing foreigners come up with such evidence of superior power. However, I hope to get over this idea of theirs. I am, My Lord,

with much respect your obedient servant,

A. P. PHAYRE.

¹ *Vide Yule, op. cit.*, p. 20 et seq, for a well illustrated account of Yenangyaung. 'The petroleum from these pits', he writes, 'is very generally used as a lamp-oil all over Burma. It is also used largely on the woodwork and planking of houses, as a preservative from insects,

and for several minor purposes, as a liniment, and even as a medicine taken internally . . . There is now a considerable export of the article from Rangoon to England, and one of the Rangoon houses had a European agent residing on the spot. The demand in England is, I believe, for use to some extent as a lubricating oil, but it is also employed by Price's Company at Lambeth in the manufacture of patent candles, and has been found to yield several valuable products. It has been sold in the London market at from £40 to £45 a ton' (*Ibid.*, p. 20).

² These three letters are missing.

³ In a minute by Dalhousie of the 25th of September 1855, he wrote: 'For some time past it has been publicly stated in the newspapers that two English officers have lately visited Ameerapoor. This morning the report has been confirmed by a letter from Mr. Spears, who mentioned the arrival of two officers, Dr. McQueen and Lieutenant Carew of H.M. 29th Foot and their presentation to the King. Money and putsoes were offered to them. They refused the money, but the putsoes were received.' He regarded this act with great displeasure, he continued. The officers ought to have realized that they could not do this sort of thing without the consent of Government. Rules, therefore, must be laid down prohibiting officers from entering Burmese territory without the formal written permission of the Commissioner of the Province, and the displeasure of Government must be conveyed to the officers concerned. He would be happy, he said, to see such an intercourse established between the two countries as should admit of officers visiting the Burmese territories freely, but for the present Government must be the judge of the propriety of such visits. (*I.S.P.*, Cons. 28 Dec. 1855, No. 15.)

⁴ A reference to the collection made by King Bodawpaya (1782-1819), but modern experts consider that more damage was committed by the process of moving the inscriptions than would have accrued through leaving them alone.

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Private. The Neilgherries, Sept. 29th, 1855.

My dear Phayre,

Your letter from Pagahm Myo dated 21st August reached me yesterday and on the same day I received from Calcutta telegraphic intelligence of your arrival at Umerapoor. Of the latter I have no particulars. Those which you give in your own letter are exceedingly interesting and exceedingly satisfactory. The difference in the tone and the manner of the reception you have met with, compared with those employed towards the Envoys your predecessors, is as marked as the difference between

the bearing of the Menghyee in 1853 and that of preceding negotiators in 1826. The continuousness of this difference of tone and manner proves that the lesson they last received has been effectual, and has left deep impressions. I was amused at seeing in the newspaper today recognition made of the enterprise of my countrymen and derived from your reception by a Mr. MacKertish¹—a high homage to the national Mac.

My plan still holds to visit Rangoon. I propose to embark at Madras about the 14th November and to reach Rangoon, I suppose, about the 20th—remaining two or three days. I have no thought of imposing myself upon you; but as I suppose they have swept away my old house long ago, perhaps you would kindly let me occupy yours during my short stay. I shall have servants and everything with me.

I wish you could have told the King of the fall of Sebastopol. But that is not yet a fact, unfortunately.

Yours sincerely,
DALHOUSIE.

¹ The Armenian governor of Malun.

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Sagaing, Aug. 31st, 1855.

My Lord,

Yesterday I received your Lordship's letters of the 5th and 7th of July. I had fully understood from the instructions given me, that your Lordship wished the treaty to be accomplished, if possible; and nothing shall be wanting on my part to bring it about. I will now proceed to narrate our movements since my last. We arrived at this place on the 29th. It is opposite the former capital of Ava, and six miles below Amrapoora. We are waiting here for arrangements to be completed for the steamer to enter the creeks, and go as near as possible to our house. The King has quite abandoned all objection he may once have had to the steamer remaining near the capital, and says by all means to take it wherever we like. Yesterday the Kyook Mau Mengyee, the Woongyee who holds the chief place, and who has always corresponded with me, came down to pay me a visit with many complimentary messages from the King. He

remained on board about three hours; we had a good deal of conversation on various subjects but not on business.

The person most in the confidence of the King is Mr. Camaretta,¹ a Goa Portuguese and a disciple of Father Abbona's. He met me here the first day, and to-day came down with a friendly message from the King and Queen, and a large number of dishes of sweetmeats. I had previously mentioned to Mr. Spears, that I considered it would be for the mutual benefit of the two countries to have a commercial and friendly treaty, and this was reported to the King. Mr. Camaretta told me he was requested by the King to say that he wished to be friendly, and that no treaty could make him more so than he was. I requested him to say, that was precisely your Lordship's own feeling, but that it was considered due to our own subjects, to the surrounding states, and to make our friendship known to the world according to the law of civilized nations, to have that friendship cemented by a formal treaty. Mr. C. said he would report this to his Majesty. He further requested me, for anything I had to say, to refer to his Majesty through him (Mr. Camaretta), that his Majesty preferred this to its coming through his Woongyees, and that he would be glad to see me at a private audience after the public reception, when he himself would tell me everything frankly. We have certainly been received with great distinction. Every possible attention has been shown us. It has been hinted that the King has some proposal to make to me at a private audience, but of the nature of it have no idea. I at one time thought it might refer to Mendoon—indeed it may—if so, I have your Lordship's full instructions—also the duties on the frontier, which, unfortunately, he got into his head had been imposed mainly to force him to a treaty. It is barely possible that the proposal may refer to securing him his throne, in case of anything threatening it. In which case I shall be prepared to say that your Lordship will not interfere in the internal affairs of the Kingdom. I hope this will be approved.

The siege of Sebastopol is looked on here with great interest. The Armenians, as might be expected, are strong on the Russian side, and the Mahomedan merchants, Indian and Persian, I understand, spread most unfavourable reports regarding us. They represent that the Russians will conquer India and restore

Pegu to the King;² Colonel Burney, I find, in his journey 25 years ago mentioned the Mahomedan merchants as our bitter enemies. The Santal insurrection³ now is, I understand, much talked of, and represented by them as a serious blow to our power.

Regarding the 'warlike stores', which will be admitted, should a treaty be signed, I presume this term included every kind of arm, muskets and cannon even.

Take it altogether, it is fortunate the King's confidence is placed in Camaretta rather than in any of the Armenians, who as a body are decidedly hostile to British interests.

Regarding a treaty, I have sounded also the Woondouk, who was the Second Envoy to Calcutta, and he also has the same reply as that attributed to the King: 'Why should we have a treaty, when we are already such good friends?' I instanced Siam and China. Of the latter he at once said, 'That was because you were at war and the treaty was that war should cease'. So that I think they regard a treaty as rather a mark of degradation, as only imposed by force. However, I shall hope to change the King's ideas on this subject. I feel assured that no Envoy to Burmah was ever before received with so much distinction.

I expect to leave this about 7 A.M. tomorrow, and I have just learnt that we can take the steamer, now that the water is high, to a place within two hundred yards of the house we are to live in.

As tomorrow will be a day of interruptions and I might not be able to address your Lordship at sufficient length to report what has occurred so far, I have written thus far, and will add another letter before the mail closes.

I am, my Lord,

with much respect your obedient servant,

A. P. PHAYRE.

¹ In his 'Notes of Conversations' (*I.S.P.*, Cons. 25 Jan. 1856, No. 16), s.v. 29 Aug. Phayre writes of Camaretta, [*he*] 'holds the appointment of Collector of Customs at the Capital. Besides this he is one of the Assistant Treasurers and has charge of the King's Wardrobe, and carries a sword by him, when he appears in public.'

In an official letter to the Governor-General dated the 9th of November 1855 (*I.S.P.*, Cons. 25 Jan. 1856, No. 13) Phayre wrote of him as about 50 years of age and having been in the country for 30 years. 'He was in the service of Prince Tharawaddy, the King's father, and also of the ex-King. He has known the present King from childhood,

holds a confidential post about his person, and is high in his favour, to an extent indeed which makes him an object of jealousy to most of the Burmese officials. Mr. Camaretta is thoroughly devoted to the King's interests, but sees that the best policy for the King is that he should remain friends with the British Government. I believe him to be quite honest.'

² 'This statement', writes Phayre in his Notes on Conversations, 'corresponds with what was told me in April last at Promé by the Revd. Mr. Nicoloi, who is stationed near Motshobomyo (i.e. Shwebo), and has been in Burmah for 24 years. He stated that when about to come down country in February last, he went to take leave of the Ein she Men, who questioned him a good deal about Russia and its distance from India. "Is there", said he, "a land road from Russia to India?" The Missionary replied there was, though it was very difficult. "Suppose then", said the Prince, "the Russians were to bring an army across, what would happen?" "I suppose", was the reply, "they would seize the English territory." At which the Prince raised a loud laugh, and clapped his hands as if applauding the Priest's supposed wishes.'

³ The Santals were a remarkable hill tribe inhabiting the foot of the Rajmahal hills in Bengal, hitherto considered peaceful, quiet, and timid, though barbarous. Their rising was sudden. For a time they plundered and murdered indiscriminately; but with the arrival of adequate forces were speedily crushed. *Vide, The Story of an Indian Upland* by F. B. Bradley Birt (London, 1905).

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Amarapoora, Sept. 2d, 1855.

My Lord,

Yesterday morning at 6 A.M. Makertich the Armenian and the Governor of the city of Amarapoora were sent to tell us all was prepared for our reception at the Residency. Between 7 and 8 o'clock we were proceeding with the steamer, proceeded [*sic*] by about a dozen golden war boats, up the Myeetngay, a small stream the mouth of which lies between Amarapoora and Ava, and which runs at the back of the former city. The river being now in flood, we went on without difficulty, the country being all under water, and in some places expanding into wide lakes. The channel, however, was winding, and we had to traverse not less than ten miles, before we reached the landing place, at a long wooden bridge. A number of officials were there ready to receive us, but the steamer, instead of coming within two hundred yards of the Residency, could only approach within about $\frac{3}{4}$ of a mile. There were elephants and horses for us, but

we preferred going on foot. On reaching the house prepared for us, we found there the Kyauk Mau Mengyee (the chief Woongyee) and the fourth Woongyee, commonly called Pa bai Woon. There was also an Atwen Woon.¹ From the landing place to the house there was a lane formed by their troops, the whole may probably [be] 2500 or 3000 men including horsemen. The whole arrangements had evidently been made with reference to the reception of the Envoys at their landing in Calcutta, which had been copied in every essential particular.

The old Woongyee was, as before, very friendly, and the Pabai Woon, who has always been represented as the opposition or war party, was likewise disposed to make himself agreeable. The former said over and over again, that the King was most anxious to make us comfortable, and felt the same interest in me as in one of his own Woongyees. In short they are so very civil that I fear there is some preposterous request to come at last.

This morning the Woondauk, whom your Lordship may remember in Calcutta with his son, brought the boy in his yellow dress of a Phoongyee, he having gone into a Monastery according to custom to study for one year. A page from the Palace was also sent with a wish that his likeness should be taken, but being Sunday I made an excuse for Mr. Grant. He will come tomorrow, and I have requested Mr. G. to make a very careful picture of the boy, as I have no doubt the King and Queen will be pleased with it [? and] allow their portraits to be taken. At present no reply has been given to the wish I expressed on the subject through Mr. Camaretta, but did not think it proper as yet to mention Your Lordship's name in connection with the request. I think from what Mr. C. says, the King will give no reply, unless I ask personally at my private interview.

D'Orgoni, it appears, is living quite privately while the Mission is here, having expressed a wish not to meet any of the English Mission. I shall take an early opportunity of giving the Burmese Court an account of this adventurer. I believe he is trying to effect timber contracts for the French Navy.

I am, My Lord,

With much respect Your obedient Servant,

A. P. PHAYRE.

¹ *Vide* Note on the Court of Ava in No. 23, note 1.

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Private. Coonoor, Oct. 10th, 1855.

My dear Phayre,

Your two very interesting letters of August 31st and Sept. 2nd. have reached me this morning. Nothing can be more satisfactory than your progress, and the reception which the Mission has met with hitherto. But I am disposed to suspect with you that it is 'too civil by half'; and that all the trumpeting will herald the way to the introduction of some impossible request. I was not before aware that Mr. Camaretta's position with the King was so influential [*sic*]. Had I been aware of it, I would have specially authorised you to conciliate his good will by such means as might be most acceptable to him, particularly in the event of our obtaining a Treaty by his aid.

I am in hopes, however, that if you saw the means of making an influential ally of him, you have not hesitated to employ them, and your having done so will be fully approved. The prospect of a Treaty certainly does not seem promising at present. You will have the more merit, and the stronger claims on the Government, if you shall overcome the difficulties in your way. It was to be expected that the utmost would be made of the slow progress of the allies at Sebastopol, and of the Sonthal rising. We have just heard of the capture of Malakhoff and of the evacuation of the Southern side of the fortress, by Telegraph; and the rest must follow, sooner or later.

I shall look for your next letters with the deepest interest. I have made my arrangements for leaving Madras on 15th November, and hope to be at Rangoon about the 20th.

Yours sincerely,
DALHOUSIE.

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Amarapoora, Sept. 20th, 1855.

My Lord,

This morning I had the pleasure to receive your Lordship's letter of the 26th of July. On the way up the river I had no occasion to go in the King's boats. They saw that such a

measure would be so inconvenient to me, that they never mentioned the subject.

D'Orgoni has been away from Amarapoora, but is at present here. I shall take the first opportunity of informing the Woongyee as to his real character. He was at the Palace yesterday, and perhaps was questioned about a treaty with us, though I have not been able to ascertain that he actually was. The term Bo-gyee, which the Burmese give him, implies a general or chief officer. I believe he here represents himself as a general in the French army, and he has a fantastic sort of Zouave uniform.

My friend MOUNG BO is here. I believe he does not deny having been *on the frontier* at the time of the last outrage, but says SHWE BÉ acted without orders. I feel confident of being in a position to tell the Woongyee plainly, that MOUNG BO should not be employed again on the frontier, and that SHWE BÉ should be severely punished. They will be prepared to make restitution for the former attack, and I propose receiving it.

I shall be anxious to receive your Lordship's further instructions regarding the site of Dalhousie. I sent up all the papers before I left Rangoon, and I hope to visit the place and make all arrangements there, after your Lordship's visit to Pegu.

I am, my Lord,

with much respect your obedient servant,

A. P. PHAYRE.

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Amarapoora, Sept. 20th, 1855.

My Lord,

On the 13th inst. we were all received at a public audience by the King. I will not enter into details, as they have been given in the public dispatch.¹ Sufficient to say that it was quite satisfactory.

On the 17th we were received by the Heir Apparent. I had on this occasion to interrupt the reader of the list of presents, who made use of an expression implying that the presents were 'offerings'. The proper correction was made, and an apology made for what the reader had said. The Prince has a very bad face, quite corresponding with his general character among the

people. His principle wife, who sat on his right hand, was very pleasing.

Tomorrow I by desire go to the Palace to have a private audience with the King. I have not yet been able to gather his decided views as to a treaty. The general tendency, however, is *against* a treaty. Tomorrow, however, I shall be able to see my way somewhat.

I believe the King is going to ask me whether the British Government will have a steamer flat (river steamer) made up for him, he to pay for the same on arrival. Somewhat cool, your Lordship will say. I believe, however, he really has not money enough to pay for it all at once, and that he would pay for it on delivery, or by instalments. I propose replying to this, that I will submit the application for your Lordship's favourable consideration. He will probably ask if payment can be taken in timber or other produce, but that I shall negative.

All the members of the Mission are actively engaged in inquiries. Major Allan is surveying the town and suburbs without any hindrance, and will produce a very good map of the country derived from inquiry among the people.²

Tomorrow I shall introduce the subject of H.M. portrait being taken, which I understand he is averse to. Why, I know not. Mr. Grant goes with me to the Palace to draw the white elephant. I shall hope to persuade the King to sit to the artist. His Majesty has not yet sent me the *half mango*, but is continually sending little presents. A fossil crocodile's skull came this morning.

Mr Oldham has just left for the coal mines, and Captain Yule has gone to accompany him part of the way, and try to see the marble quarries.

I keep a journal of all my conversations with the Burmese officials &c. but have not yet transmitted any of them to Calcutta. I reserve them for the general report of the Mission.³

Each member of the Mission is quite well, and we have had an exceedingly pleasant trip. I do not expect to get away before the 4th or 5th of next month.

I am, My Lord,

with much respect your obedient servant,

A. P. PHAYRE.

P.S. I have not yet seen anything here which would be worth purchasing for your Lordship. They make nothing but silks and some silver articles.

¹ The 'public dispatch' was dated at Amarapoora the 14th of September. It differs somewhat in its description of details from Yule's account (*op. cit.*, *supra*, pp. 79-89) which was based on Phayre's account in his 'Notes of Conversations' (*I.S.P.*, Cons. 25 Jan. 1856, No. 16), *s.v.* 13 September. For this reason, and for its intrinsic interest, it is given here in full, together with its continuation, written by Phayre on the 18th of September, describing his visit to the Heir Apparent. (*Vide* Yule, *op. cit.*, *supra*, pp. 90-3.)

[Phayre's official dispatch of 14 September 1855, *I.S.P.*, Cons. 26 Oct. 1855, No. 62.]

'I have the honour to report for the information of the President in Council the formal reception of the Mission yesterday by His Majesty the King of Ava.

'Early in the morning the Burmese deputation appointed to conduct us assembled at the Mission Residency in their dresses of ceremony. It consisted of the Nan-ma-dau Woon (Senior Envoy to Calcutta) the Woondouk, the Tara Thoogyee, or Chief Justice, and several other officers.

'Our residence here is nearly opposite the South West angle of the fortified City of Amarapoora, the lake intervening, but as the busiest and most populous part of the City is that suburb which extends without the walls to the West and South-West of the Fort, the Burmese Ministers were anxious that the procession should adopt a more circuitous line bringing us through the main streets of the suburb. We were then to enter the Western gate of the fortified City, make a semi-circuit of the latter, and enter the palace which stands symmetrically in the centre of the City by the Eastern fortified entrance.

'It had been arranged with the ministers that the procession should be so timed, as to be enabled to advance to the Hall of audience directly on reaching the palace gate, without having to wait, at the Yoom dau or elsewhere, for the passage of the princes and others with their trains as has on previous similar occasions been customary.

'After an early breakfast we quitted the Residency about $\frac{1}{4}$ before 9 a.m. and crossed the lake at the point selected where jetties had been constructed for our embarkation and landing.

'The Cavalry, the Escort and the Horses intended for the King with the carriage and other presents had been sent round by the long bridge mentioned in a former despatch, and were awaiting us on the other side of the lake. The procession was formed as follows:

The cases of presents carried by Burmese porters.

The horses for presentation.

The Carriage (drawn by men).

The Cavalry of the Escort consisting of 14 Sowars of the 8th Irregular Cavalry under Lieut. Mackenzie and Russaldar Wulagut Hasain.

The band (a part of that of H.M. 29 Regiment).

The Infantry of the Escort, 73 Men of H.M. 84th Regiment under Lieut. Hardy and Ensign Woodhouse.

The Governor General's letter borne by Capt. Yule (accompanied by a sailor carrying the H. Company's Jack) on an elephant.

The Envoy in his Tonjon with two Khen Khale umbrellas, and escorted right and left by the Nan-ma-dau-Woon and the Woon-douk MOUNG MHO on elephants.

Dr. Forsyth and the Tara thoogyee on an elephant.

Major G. Allan and a Tsaré dau gyee of the Hlwotdau on an elephant.

Captain Rennie I.N. and the Chief of the King's war boats on ditto.

Mr. Oldham and the Keeper of the Seal of the Hlwotdau on ditto.

Captain Willis H.M. 84th Regt. commanding the whole escort with the Tsengoo Woon tale 4th Envoy to Calcutta on an elephant.

Captain Tripe with an under writer to the Hlwot dau on an elephant.

Lieutt. Heathcote I.N. on ditto.

Mr. C. Grant on ditto.

Mr. Edwards and Mr. Ogilvie I.N. on ditto.

Dr. Cholmely.

Captains Porter and Duncan of the Irrawaddy Steam Flotilla.

'There was some delay in arranging the procession at starting and a few hitches on the road, as might be expected. The Heir Apparent was just entering in a golden litter as we arrived, and we were delayed some time whilst his armed retinue filed off, of which manœuvre [*sic*] probably more was made than was necessary. But under all the circumstances, and considering that fixed hours are unknown in this country, no delay took place that could be considered unreasonable or disrespectful.

'The streets were lined throughout with Burmese troops, foot and horse, and the crowd of spectators was large everywhere, but most dense as we approached the palace. The band played at intervals throughout the march.

'At the outer gate of the palace we dismounted and entered on foot, leaving the Escort outside. I here took charge of the Governor General's letter to the King, carrying it on a gilded salver and walking between the Nan-ma-dau Woon and the Woondouk. Some attempt was made to induce me, and other officials of the Mission to imitate the salutation to the palace made by the Burmese officials, but this was checked at once. On entering the second court we found ourselves in front of the hall of audience which occupies the facade of the palace on that side, a gilded timber structure on a masonry basement. Access was by a stair at one side. At the foot of this we took off our shoes, and the dirty condition of the steps and exterior colonnade along which we passed

to the Central Hall was the only point in the day's proceedings which gave ground for dissatisfaction.

'The form of the Hall is much like that of the Choir and Transepts of a Cathedral, the nave being represented only by a slight projection and portico. The arrangement will be understood if I say that the throne occupies almost the position of the high altar in a Roman Catholic Church, which it also much resembles in character. The princes of the blood were seated along the sides of the Chair between and behind the pillars; the ministers and other officials were ranged along the transepts and immediately in front of the throne, though at a considerable distance from it.

'After waiting perhaps twenty minutes the sound of music from some inner Court announced the King's approach. Shortly afterwards the gilded lattice doors behind the throne were run back and His Majesty was seen ascending a stair from behind, slowly, and using his sword as a staff, as if oppressed by the weight of his robes and [*sic*] also carried a white Chowree in his left hand. Mr. Crawford notices the same appearance of oppression in the account of his interview. I do not at present know whether this oppression is actual, or only a piece of symbolical etiquette. The Queen immediately followed and took her seat on His Majesty's right hand, assisting to hand in the usual paraphernalia of a Burmese Monarch (which were presented by a young female from behind the throne), and occasionally fanning the King. Her Majesty at first was smoking a Cigar, which was almost the only circumstance that marred the solemn pomp of the whole ceremonial. The young girl alluded to appeared about 12 or 13 years of age, and is supposed to have been the heir apparent's daughter, who resides in the palace. She is fair and wore a head dress similar to that of the Queen.

'The light was bad but the King appeared to us to be a man of unusually refined appearance for a Burmese, and having the national physiognomy very much subdued. The Queen is decidedly plain, but her head dress was one which would have been trying to any lady. It consisted of a close cap entirely concealing the hair and ears and drawn at top into a high peak curving in a valute (?) to the front. The rest of the dress was also quite different from any ordinary Burmese costume and had rather an Elizabethan character. The King wore a round tiara rising to a peak in the centre, with wings or upright flaps at the sides, and his whole dress was entirely free from the fantastic and exaggerated character of that of the courtiers. The caps and robes of both their Majesties were entirely covered with diamonds, or what appeared to be so, so that the colour or material of their vestment was not distinguishable.

'There was then the usual preliminary of the choral chaunt [*sic*] of hymn by some Brahmins in a sort of pew or screened recess on each side of the throne.

'A Na-Khan of the Court then recited a formula as the opening of a

solemn sitting informing His Majesty that some royal gifts to Pagodas which he purposed offering, were ready. A Than-dau-zen seated near us said on behalf of the King, 'Let the offerings be made'. Certain religious paraphernalia, which were in front of the Hall of Audience, were then removed to be offered.

'The Than-dau-zen next read the Governor General's letter and the list of presents for the King and Queen successively.

'These recitations and readings were all intoned in a high key strangely resembling that used in the English Cathedral service, and the resemblance was increased by the elevation and protraction of tone on the last two or three words of each document as in the amen of our liturgy.

'The usual formal questions were then asked as to the health of the English Ruler, the length of time elapsed since we had quitted the English country, and the felicity of the people and the seasons. There was nothing objectionable in the expression of these questions, or the rendering of my replies, though the old ambiguity as to the English ruler, and English country, was retained. I expressly, however, named *Bengal* in my answer to the second question, and I had to correct the Than-dau-zen when in repeating my reply he substituted the old expression.

'These questions were put up by the Atwenwoon who was seated halfway between us and the throne. The general impression of the gentlemen of the Mission is that the King did not open his lips at all. I thought I perceived a slight inclination of the head to the Atwenwoon, as a signal to put the usual questions.

'Presents were then bestowed on myself and the other Officers, after which their Majesties rose and departed as they had come. We were then informed that we were at liberty to take leave, and we were not sorry to do so, as the cramped attitude in which we sat was becoming excessively inconvenient.

'Leaving the Hall of audience we were invited to visit the "palace of the Lord White Elephant", and we were all agreeably surprised in finding him such a noble specimen of his kind, and so well entitled to his appellation. The corners of the Palace Yard were occupied by dancers, buffoons, tumblers, performers on the tight rope etc., etc., who amused the crowd of attendants during the ceremonial.

'The whole impression left on our minds by the audience was that of a royal and imposing solemnity, and I am satisfied that nothing derogatory to the dignity of the British Government, even in the eyes of the Burmese populace, took place throughout the ceremonial of the day.

'We returned by the route that we had gone, and reached the Residency about 4 o'clock. The day was partly clouded and therefore favorable, and I am happy to say that in spite of their protracted exposure, I hear of no bad effects among the men of the Escort.

'Mr. Spears saw the King immediately after the audience, and he

informs me that His Majesty expressed himself as highly satisfied, and asked if we had been also pleased.'

[Phayre's official dispatch of the 18th Sept. 1855. *I.S.P.*, Cons. 26 Oct. 1855, No. 63.]

'In continuation of my dispatch No. 7 of the 14th instant, which accompanies this, I have the honour to report that the Mission yesterday was received by the Heir Apparent at a formal Durbar.

'The arrangements were much the same as on our visit to the King, but I took only the Cavalry of the Escort and we followed only the most direct route to the Prince's house instead of the circuitous line by which we had proceeded in going to the King's audience.

'The presents set apart for His Highness included the Buggy and two Arab Horses.

'We dismounted at the outer gate of the enclosure and took off our shoes, as before at the foot of the staircase. As before also this staircase was exceedingly dirty.

'We were received in a large plain hall full of people, but so dark, that we could scarcely discern who were present. After a few minutes the Prince and his wife appeared at a door opening into a higher and lighter room, and took their seats overlooking the Hall.

'The Prince was dressed in a rich jewelled surcoat with a conical Mitre similar in shape to that worn by the courtiers, but made apparently of Khin Khole and thickly set with gems. He made anything but a good impression on us not perhaps prepossessed in his favor. He bears no resemblance to his royal brother, having the Indo-Chinese physiognomy very strangely and repulsively developed, the retreating forehead, said to be characteristic of the Alompra dynasty, and an appearance of premature age, as if induced by dissipation.

'The Princess, or Queen, as she is sometimes called, on the contrary impressed us as a graceful and modest looking young lady, not quite at home in her splendid and cumbrous attire. This in general character resembled that worn by the Queen on the 13th. This Princess is, like the Queen, her husband's half sister. She is said to be 22 or 23 years of age.

'After the Prince and Princess had taken their seats a profound and unbroken silence continued for some minutes, after which pawn etc. was served to the Mission and the list of presents was then read.

'In the preliminary recitation I had to interrupt the reader, who made use of the improper expression "Tshek" as applied to the Governor General's presents, implying gifts "respectfully offered". As there was some hesitation about correcting it, I was compelled to threaten that I would instantly depart, and was rising for that purpose when the retraction was made, and a proper expression substituted. A full apology for this impropriety was afterwards made by the Prince's Woon.

'After this the usual stupid questions were asked by one of the officials; presents were then produced for the Gentlemen of the Mission;

the Prince and Princess retired and we took leave. The Heir apparent did not move his lips or a muscle the whole time. It was altogether a dull and unmeaning ceremonial, wanting the royal circumstance and barbaresque splendour, which gave such interest to the audience at the Palace. But it was soon over. We were not in the Hall more than 20 minutes.

'On retiring we were invited to take refreshment in a shed prepared for the purpose, where sweetmeats etc. were set out. We then returned home as we had come.

'It had been intended that we should on the same day pay a visit to the King's Uncle, known as the Bo Mhoo Meng tha, who is Commander in Chief of the troops in the Shan States and stationed at Marray. But there were certain matters of etiquette regarding this visit, on which I could not come to agreement with the Minister, and the intended visit fell to the ground in consequence.'

² *Vide* Yule, *op. cit.*, *supra*, plate XXII, facing p. 167.

³ *Vide* *Intro.*, pp. lv-lvi.

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Amarapoora, Sept. 30th, 1855.

My Lord,

I have received your Lordship's letters of the 13th and 30th of August.

On the 21st inst. I had a so-called private audience with the King and I beg to enclose an extract of my notes thereon.¹ It is evident he was averse to a treaty, and, as there were several persons present, I could not press the matter so closely as I otherwise should have done. I was to have seen him on the 28th, but he put me off, and now the next visit stands for tomorrow. In the mean time he has been consulting D'Orgoni, and, it appears, thinks his one chance is to send that person with presents and (I believe) a letter to the Emperor of France, in the hope through his influence of regaining a portion of Pegu. It is extraordinary that he should still think this possible, but it is undoubtedly the case, and the news of your Lordship's expected departure for Europe has had the effect of making him suppose this the most favourable opportunity for making an effort.

Your Lordship will notice in the notes of my conversation with the King, that I referred to warlike stores being allowed to pass, if a treaty were concluded. A few days ago the King said to Mr. Spears, 'I shall not now require muskets; the Pabai

Woon (one of the Ministers) has agreed to supply a number'. This was meant to show he did not care about warlike stores being admitted from the territory. I fear a good deal of sulphur comes through Arakan, probably by the Aeng Pass, and efforts must be made to prevent this, and make them feel their dependence on us for that article.² Tomorrow I shall see whether the King has finally determined or not; or, if he is not explicit, I shall go to the principal Woongyee and have a distinct understanding. Your Lordship will see, however, that the feeling is strongly against a treaty, and, if I find that the other considerations, which I shall urge upon the King—the advantages to him of a more intimate connection with us than now exists—are not appreciated, I shall leave in about ten days more.

Professor Oldham is now away at the coal fields, which lie about 60 miles above this.

Captain Rennie left this in a fast boat yesterday, as soon as possible after the receipt of your Lordship's orders.

The several members of the Mission are collecting a good deal of information. Major Allan will have a very good map of the town and suburbs, and an estimate of the population.

I paid a visit to the four Woongyees, who received me in a very friendly style. I went to the house of each, and at each house a breakfast was laid out. They also introduced their wives. At one house, that of the Pakhan Woon, who was a Phoongyee until two or three years ago, there was a party from the Palace to see us—among others two Princesses, second cousins [*sic*] to the King.

I went also to the old 'Dalla Woon', who produced his daguerreotype portrait taken in Calcutta, which his wife appeared very proud of.

He thinks all attempts to induce the King to have his portrait taken have been unsuccessful. I have tried through his favourite attendant Camaretta, but he has only smiled without giving any reply. He has a prejudice against it, though what it is I cannot exactly say. I can only ask him myself, when one or two are present, or I might give offence.

The only buildings in Amarapoorra worth seeing are the Kyoungs or Monasteries. Some of these are very splendid, beautifully carved on the outside and one mass of carved wood

gilded throughout inside. There is one of the buildings, of which I am getting a model made for your Lordship, but it will take some time to finish. The Palace is all of wood, old and not in particularly good order. The city within the walls is well laid out, and the streets broad. That and the suburbs can scarcely contain a larger population than 50 to 60,000 souls. The Burmese generally include in the capital old Ava and other places in the vicinity, and count the population as very large indeed ; but including all these I should scarcely think the population exceeded 100,000 souls.

I shall hope to see your Lordship at Rangoon in November, and then to settle the site for Dalhousie. I am, My Lord,
with much respect your obedient servant,

A. P. PHAYRE.

Extract of conversation with H.M.
the K. of Ava.

Note. This is a sermon of Gaudama containing thirty-eight rules of life or a summary of beatitudes. It is one of the first lessons taught to Burmese youth.

Note. The original is in Pali.

K. Do you know Burmese writing or literature?

P. I do somewhat your Majesty.

K. I have heard of you now for three years. Have you read the Mengala Thoot?

P. I have your Majesty.

K. Do you know the meaning of it?

P. I do. I have read the Burmese interpretation of it.

K. How many precepts does it contain?

P. Thirty-eight.

K. Do you remember them?

P. I am sorry to say your Majesty, it is so long since I learnt the Mengala Thoot, that I cannot repeat it now.

The King here repeated some of the precepts of this discourse against pride, anger, evil associates and others. He continued for full five minutes or more, commenting on, and enforcing the rules contained in the sermon.

Father Abbona. What your Majesty has been pleased to say is just the same as what is contained in our Kyasatsa (Scriptures) and then addressing me.

P. It is what our Bible says. Certainly it is in accordance with the Bible.

I here took an opportunity of saying to the Woondouk in an undertone, I hope His Majesty would not be offended, at any mistakes I made in forms of address, and speech to him. This being repeated by the Woondouk the King said

Oh, don't be afraid, I give you permission, just to speak as you find most convenient to yourself.

K. Have you, your suite and escort, everything comfortable about you?

P. From the day we entered your Majesty's territory, everything has been made to make us happy, I am particularly obliged to the Woon-douk for the trouble he has taken.

K. Very well, I wish to be friendly with the English, and have always been so, have I not?

P. Certainly you have.

K. Did I not withdraw my troops as soon as I had the power to do so, and when the Talaings were starving below, did I not allow food to go down to them?

P. Certainly your Majesty did.

K. Well then if friendship is complete, what more can be wanting?

P. With your Majesty's permission, I will state what is wanting according to our Western ideas.

K. Certainly say on.

Note. The King here alluded to Burmese troops before Prome having been withdrawn, or retreating to the capital about 25 Dec. and to [the] partial [im]portation of rice into Prome dur[ing] the [scare] of 1853. [I did] not consi[der] it neces-sary [or] advisable [to] dispute either assertion by the King, as [it] may be conced[ed] that he per[sonal]ly never com-mitted or authorized any positively [hostile] Act. Rice was allow[ed] to come in f[or] a time but was stopp[ed] when it began to come too fa[st].³

- P. All the great Western nations the English, the French, and others hold that when there is friendship between two nations it is proper to cement it by a written treaty. That your Majesty is what is now wanting between your Majesty and the English Ruler.
- K. But if a treaty is made there must be mutual advantage?
- P. Certainly your Majesty, I would not propose it, were it not to be for your Majesty's benefit also.
- K. (I did not clearly hear the next question. Frequently the King had his mouth full of pân,⁴ and I was obliged to refer to the Woondouk to explain what he said. It was intimated that the King wished to be informed of the benefit to himself of a treaty.)
- P. As long as there is no treaty, the English Ruler will not permit gunpowder and warlike stores to pass. When there is a treaty his confidence agreeably to our Western ideas will be perfect, and he will then allow them to pass.
- K. I have heard a great deal of you, and that you are wise and well disposed. I should not have taken the same pains to receive everyone. I should have done according to custom. You have commenced well. But in man's life and in every transaction, there is a beginning, a middle and an end. Let your middle and ending be as good as your beginning. Remember there must be a mutual

Note. The King illustrated this by running his fingers along the handle of his sword of State, which was on a stand before him.

advantage or no treaty could be proper, and such as to satisfy both countries. If I were to sanction a treaty discreditable to me, I should lose my reputation in history, just as a thousand years hence your name would be stained if you did anything to the damage of your country. Ponder upon this.

P. I am fully sensible of the truth of what your Majesty urges. A treaty which I would propose, would be for the mutual advantage of the two nations; without that it could have no stability. If I can succeed in persuading your Majesty to conclude such a treaty, then I feel that my middle and my ending will be as successful as your Majesty has said my commencement has been.

K. Very well—Ponder on what I have said.⁵

¹ Yule, *op. cit.*, *supra*, pp. 95–100, also reports this conversation, his account being taken from Phayre's 'Notes of Conversations' (above referred to).

² Dalhousie immediately acted upon this suggestion, and orders were sent to the Commissioner of Arakan to prevent the import of sulphur by the An Pass into Burma (*I.S.P.*, Cons. 25 Jan. 1856, No. 17).

³ This note is only partly legible, being bound into the volume and some portions obliterated. It is however, given in exactly the same words in Yule, *op. cit.*, *supra*, p. 97.

⁴ *Pan*—the leaf of the betel creeper. The areca nut is rolled up in it with a little shell-lime for chewing.

⁵ The Burmese formula for postponing a decision. (Yule, *op. cit.*, *supra*, p. 98, note). This was not the end of the conversation: the King went on to discuss the Crimean War and the European situation. (Yule, *op. cit.*, *supra*, pp. 98–100).

This is Phayre's last D.O. letter to Lord Dalhousie on the Ava Mission. The Mission did not leave Amarapoora until 21 October. As the chief features of its stay there from 21 September to 21 October are mentioned in Phayre's official letters of the 9th and 24th of October,

a summary with extracts of the former, and the whole of the latter are given below. A more detailed account of the same period is to be found in Yule, *op. cit.*, *supra*, pp. 105-29, and Phayre's 'Notes of Conversation' in the *India Secret Proceedings*, vol. 196 (India Office).

I. *Phayre's official letter to the Government of India, dated Amarapoora, 9 October 1855 (I.S.P., Cons. 25 Jan. 1856, No. 7).*

In continuation of his No. 9 of the 30th Sept. reports a further audience with the King on Oct. 1st. 'Late on the [evening?] I received a message from the King through Mr. Spears, requesting me to make no mention of the meeting at the morrow's interview, and it was added that if His Majesty found the new Governor General, who, he understood, was expected from England, would grant no better terms than those offered, he would accept the proposed treaty. I considered it therefore better not again to mention the subject of a treaty unless at a strictly private audience. On the morning of the 1st I was told His Majesty wished to defer the meeting until the next day. It appeared evident that he wished to prolong our stay at the capital, for the Woondouk Moungh Mhon mentioned that the usual festivals at the breaking up of the rains would take place at the next full moon (25 October) and that it would be well for me to remain for them. I replied I could scarcely stay so long.

'On reaching the Palace about 10 a.m. of the 2nd Inst, I was ushered into an apartment behind the Public Hall of Audience, and there were not less than one hundred people present. The conversation related entirely to subjects connected with Burmese history and theology, raised and continued by the King.'

'I had fixed to pay a visit on the 4th to the Principal Woongyee, now called the Ma-gway Mengyee, and lately with the title of Kyouk Mau Menzyee [*sic*]. On the evening of the 2nd Mr. Camaretta came to me with a message from the King, begging me not to mention the treaty to the Ma-gway Mengyee. I promised compliance, but said I should expect an explicit reply or explanation from His Majesty personally of his view and intentions, at a private audience hereafter. Mr. Camaretta said the King told him to tell me he had no objection to the terms of the treaty, a draft of which I had furnished him, but that he did not wish to conclude it yet.'

At the Magwe Mingyi's he brought up the subject of frontier outrages; the Woongyee agreed to place persons 'of moderation and judgment' on the border, to prevent misunderstandings. He promised also to have Shwé Bé punished, and that ruffian was condemned to 5 years' imprisonment. He agreed to pay compensation for property plundered at Laydee village and presented Phayre with 'a fair list of valuation of the stolen articles' to the amount of 636 tickals or about Rs. 900.

About D'Orgoni he communicated to the Woongyee the substance of the information contained in enclosures to the Govt. of India's letter

No. 119 of 1st August 1855. 'He replied that M. D'Orgoni had not stated he was employed by the Emperor but that the King considered as the Emperor was a friend of the English, that this would be a good opportunity to open a communication with him and they purposed doing so. He asked if we should make any opposition to this? I replied, No, their messengers would not be prevented passing through our territory.

'I requested an audience with the King for the 6th instant. His Majesty sent a message to know if I had anything particular to say. I replied, not on this occasion, but only to pay my respects as His Majesty had said he would be glad to receive me at any time, and had told me to bring the Gentlemen of the Mission. After the 6th had been fixed, the audience was put off until the 8th instant on the ground of His Majesty being indisposed.

'On the 8th I proceeded to the Palace accompanied by Captain Yule, Doctor Forsyth, Major Allan, Mr. Oldham and Mr. Edwards. About one hundred people were present at the interview. The King spoke as before of the history of his Country, and the Buddhist Philosophical tenets. He asked Mr. Oldham, who had lately returned from the Coal mines, about rocks in general, but said not a word about Coal. Dr. Forsyth he questioned about the elementary substances of the body. The interview was not so long as my previous audiences, but His Majesty was, as before, very affable. He presented me with a valuable history of Burmah and some Theological Books, and gave suitable presents to the other Gentlemen.

'It is evident that the King wishes to prolong our stay, because, as far as I can gather he is unwilling to assent to what I propose, and yet cannot make up his mind to say no. I shall however in a few days request a private audience and an explicit reply, but of course will avoid as much as possible pressing the subject in a way that may be offensive.'

II. *Phayre's official letter to the Government of India dated Pagan, 24 Oct. 1855.*

'I have now the honor to report the termination of my Mission to the Burmese Court. I regret to say that it has not resulted in the conclusion of a treaty.

'In my last dispatch (dated the 9th instant) you were informed that the King's inclination seemed to be rather to stave off or delay the treaty, than to refuse it, and that he had desired me not to open the subject with the Woongyees, giving me to understand that he would himself favor me with a strictly private audience for its discussion.

'His Majesty, however, on further consideration seems to have been indisposed to face this personal discussion. For the day after my letter was despatched he sent Mr. Spears to say that he now thought it better that I should see the Woongyee on the subject.

'Mr Spears was also commissioned to sound me regarding the offerings which the King wishes to make at the Pagodas of Prome, Rangoon and Pegu, and as to the facilities which would be conceded

to Burmese Pilgrims wishing to visit the Buddhist Sacred Spots in India. My reply to Mr. Spears was that no offerings ostensibly coming as Royal offerings could be allowed to enter the British territory until the Treaty should be concluded.

'The morning of the 12th was fixed for an interview with the Magwé Mengyee and the special discussion of the treaty.

'On proceeding to the Woongyee's house at the time appointed, I found there the Woondouk Moungh Mhon and Mr. Mackertich. After breakfast and a good deal of the usual miscellaneous talk, I requested that the room might be cleared and then entered on business. I placed the draft treaty before the Ministers and urged to the best of my ability the benefits that would result from its conclusion, to both nations.

'The Woongyee and Woondouk did not dispute the desirability of the treaty, but referred constantly to the King's wish, that its conclusion should be deferred, and that I should 'ponder well' the circumstances and lay them again before the 'British Ruler' before seeking a final settlement. In this vague and hazy way of talking they were evidently beating about the bush, anxious that I should start the question at which their hints, and probably all His Majesty's moral lectures and historical allusions during the different audiences, had aimed. This subject I suppose to have been the restoration of territory to the King, but of course I remained blind to all their innuendos and to the end of the discussion their argument took no more definite form.

'At the close of the interview, as I once more pressed on the Woongyee that if sincere in their expressions of friendship there could be no just objection to the conclusion of the treaty, he said 'he would try what he could do,' and promised to give me a definite answer on Monday the 15th.

'In the evening Mr. Spears came to the Residency by the order of the King. What message he was charged with exactly it was difficult to make out. But from his account it appeared that some of my expressions during the morning's conference had been misrepresented to His Majesty, as if they had been of a threatening character, and the King was consequently in a state of great excitement and anger. I sent back Mr. Spears to tranquillize the King with an assurance that no such expressions as those ascribed to me had been used.

'On the 15th the Woongyee put off the final interview till next day.

'On the 16th I went accordingly to his house and received from him a definite refusal of a treaty with a short written document of which a translation is annexed. The ground taken by the Ministers to-day was entirely changed. Till now they had only urged that the treaty should not be executed in a hurry. Now they declined it altogether, as contrary to Burman Custom. We had some further discussion on the subject, and of the inconveniences which might result from the non-conclusion of the treaty, but the new parrot cry of 'Contrary to Custom' was the only reply or argument from these Burmese Ministers.

'Through all these discussions it appeared to me that the sagacious

Magwé Mengyee was not maintaining his own sentiments. I have strong reason to believe that he was favorable to the conclusion of a treaty, but that His Majesty's personal aversion to the measure unfortunately prevailed over the Minister's wiser counsels. Nothing now remained for me, but to solicit that days should be fixed for our farewell audiences of the King and Prince, and that all necessary arrangements should be made for our departure on the 22nd instant.

'According to appointment we visited the Prince on the 19th. He received us at an apartment appropriated to his use in the outer court of the Palace, and made a very much more favorable impression on our whole party than he had done in the former interview. On this occasion he was easy good humoured and chatty, and with these advantages of manner his personal appearance was much more prepossessing in the everyday Burmese dress, than it had been in the awkward and sullen splendour of his state robes and mitre. His Highness' questions characteristically savoured much of brimstone and gunpowder.

'Next day (20th) we were received by His Majesty. The audience was not a formal one, and did not take place in the Great Hall or Throne Room. The King was suffering from fever, and spoke less than usual, but what he did say was marked by a most friendly spirit, and by an evident desire to impress upon us his desire for the continuance of peace and amity. He dwelt especially on the importance of having men of judgment and moderation on the frontier, observing that almost all national quarrels arise from the folly and mismanagement of inferior officials, and he personally urged on Major Allan (whose name is well known to the King from his special deputation on the frontier) to cultivate friendly intercourse with the neighbouring Burmese authorities.

'On Sunday (21st) the whole of the Council of Woongyees came to breakfast at the Residency, and bid us farewell. The conversation was general and friendly, and they all made themselves very agreeable. It is curious to see the strong interest they take in the course of events in Europe.

'The King's letter to the Most Noble the Governor-General was brought in form the same evening and handed over to our charge. We then proceeded at once to the steamers, escorting the letter with the same honours that we had accorded to that of the Most Noble the Governor-General, on the day of our first audience. Next morning we dropped down the River. We were escorted as far as Kyouk la toun by the venerable Nan ma dau Woon, the Woondouk, Mr. Camaretta, Mr. Spears, and Father Abbona. Makertich accompanied us to his Government at Maloon.

'I expect to reach Rangoon about the 3rd or 4th proximo. I defer opening the King's letter for translation until we have crossed our own frontier.'

Lord Dalhousie wrote no demi-official letter to Phayre on the results of the Mission to Ava; as he arrived in Rangoon shortly after the Envoy's return from Amarapoora this was unnecessary. This gap in the corre-

spondence can only be filled in by reference to the official documents concerning the Mission. In a minute dated the 13th December 1855 the Governor-General summed up its results. He began by expressing his entire satisfaction at the conduct of the Mission. It was unfortunate that no formal compact, such as was desired by Her Majesty's Government, had been obtained, notwithstanding the utmost endeavours of the Envoy; still he himself had all along believed a treaty to be useless under the circumstances.

'But the primary object of the late Mission,' he wrote, 'was to reciprocate the friendly feeling and the peaceful dispositions which the King of Ava had volunteered to offer to the Government of India, and to confirm the amicable relations which in practice were already growing up between the states. In this, its primary object, the Mission has been eminently successful. It found the King full of the utmost kindness and consideration for the whole body of the Mission, down even to the soldiers of the escort. The ministers were unreserved, respectful and well disposed. The Eng-she-meng, or heir-apparent, who has always been represented as possessing and exercising a large and hostile influence against the English, was found devoid of all influence, either with the King or with the people; and his Highness' bearing formed no exception to the general respect which was shown to the Mission.

'From its first entrance into Burmese waters until its return to our own frontier the Mission was treated with the highest distinction, and with the utmost hospitality and liberality.

'No Mission from any state has ever yet received such marks of honour from the Court of Ava; and it has returned charged with reiterated and solemn assurances, which were apparently altogether sincere, of the earnest desire of the King of Ava and of his people to be at peace with us, and to maintain the most friendly and closest relations with us.

'I for my part am entirely content with the results of the Mission, and I desire to record my firm conviction, that peace with Burma is to the full as secure as any written Treaty could have made it.'

The thanks of Government would be formally conveyed to Major Phayre and the other members of the Mission, and through Phayre to Mr. Spears. Favourable notice was also to be made of the 'remarkable and exemplary conduct' of the European escort.

Later on the Governor-General sanctioned the retention by each member of the Mission of one of the King's presents made to each personally. Phayre, however, was allowed to retain a double share in memory of his service. The soldiers of the escort for their exemplary conduct were granted double pay for their period of escort duty. But the sailors of the 'Zenobia' were not similarly rewarded: 'they could not resist the usual temptation to cause "the Cannakin clink";' wrote the Governor-General. Captain Tripe had taken some 200 photographs; of these 120 were selected, copies of which were made and presented by Government

to all members of the Mission. Several of them were incorporated by Yule in his published work on the Mission, as also were reproductions of several of Grant's pictures. But the greater number of the illustrations to that exceptionally well-illustrated volume came from the versatile pen of its compiler. (*Vide I.S.P.*, Cons. 25 Jan. 1856, Nos. 24-37.)

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H.C.S. Feroze, November 20th, 1855.

My dear Phayre,

As your subscription for a Church in the Town of Rangoon has now been opened, I wish according to my promise to contribute five hundred rupees to it.¹ You will remember that the old Talien, who waited upon me, asked me to contribute towards the expense of regilding the Shwe Dagon Pagoda, on which he is now engaged. I could not, of course, do this as any mark of reverence towards their creed or of respect towards their religious buildings. But the Shwe Dagon is a very noble work of art. It forms a grand feature in our Capital of Pegu. The regilding of it will add greatly to its splendour; and on these grounds I shall be glad to subscribe 250 Rupees.

A cheque is enclosed.

Believe me to be, Sincerely yours,
DALHOUSIE.

¹ The present Protestant Cantonment Church in Rangoon. This letter was written at the conclusion of Lord Dalhousie's third and last visit to Burma, which he paid on his way back to Calcutta from the Nilgiri Hills. His short minute of 27 Nov. on the subject of his visit relates mainly to Rangoon. After proudly commenting upon the 'complete tranquillity' enjoyed by the province, he writes thus of Rangoon:—

'The improvement which has been effected in the town and cantonment of Rangoon is most striking.

'The town has had its streets regularly laid out, and many of them are already formed.

'The Strand road is nearly completed, and with the other town roads is at present in excellent order.

'The houses are regularly built, many pukka buildings are finished, and very many more are in progress. The streets are named. Drainage is provided for, and lamp-posts for lighting the town are erected. The land has been readily disposed of either by sale or lease, and the price or rent has been promptly and easily paid.

'In the suburbs and cantonments, the jungle has been entirely cleared away, and a grass plain now appears in its place. Excellent roads have everywhere been made. Good Commissariat buildings have been erected. The artillery lines and the native lines are finished. The European barracks and the hospitals are completed. They are as perfect as their imperfect materials will permit, and the men are highly satisfied with them. The health of the station is very good, and the Depot Hospital has long had but few patients in it.

'I expected much in this my last visit to Rangoon, and I have not been disappointed. For these very favorable results the Government owes its thanks to the Civil and to the Military Authorities, by whose joint exertions and hearty concord the work has been accomplished.

'I beg therefore to offer my thanks to the Commissioner, Major Phayre, to the General Sir S. Steel, to the Brigadier Col. Russell, under whom the men of H.M. 84th Regiment contributed largely to our success, to the Superintending Engineer Major Glasfurd, and to the Superintending Surgeon Dr. Forsyth.

'I beg also that my thanks may be conveyed to Lieut. Fraser and to Capt. Keighly, by whom the military and civil works have been mainly executed, and generally to the officers on the spot.

'I have only to add that what I have now seen done confirms the conviction I have entertained from the first, that Rangoon will ere long become one of the most beautiful cities and stations within the whole bounds of India.' (*J.S.P.*, Cons. 28 Dec. 1855, No. 10.)

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Rangoon, Decr. 5th.

My Lord,

On my way back to Rangoon¹ I met with such a strong head wind that I nearly got out of fuel, and had it not been for meeting the Fire Queen, which took me in tow, I fear I should not have been here for some time.

I have received no additional news from Amarapoora since your Lordship left. I enclose copies of Mr. Spears' letters, which have not yet been furnished. I also beg to enclose a memo. of what I was informed regarding a treaty being projected with Burmah by the United States Govt.

I have forwarded by this steamer directed to your Lordship two carved chests, two lacquered chests and the marble Pagoda. The gold articles also go up. I will hereafter furnish your Lordship with an account of these, when the models go up. I hope the Feroze made a good passage up.

I have distributed your Lordship's Proclamation regarding

Sebastopol, and I shall send a copy with my next letter to the Woongyee.

Nothing whatever of importance has occurred here since your Lordship left. I am, My Lord,

with much respect your obedient servant,

A. P. PHAYRE.

6th, 7 a.m.

I have just received a letter from Mr. Spears of the 23d ulto., copy of which I beg to enclose.

¹ Phayre had accompanied Lord Dalhousie to inspect the site of the proposed new city of Dalhousie near Negrais.

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Amarapoora, 23 Nov. 1855.

My dear Major Phayre,

Since your departure on the 22nd we have not had a day without rain, a great deal too much indeed for the rice crop. Cotton, I am also told, will suffer by it. However, the paddry will only be partially affected, the west side of the river promising an abundant harvest, whilst on the east side to the southward of Amarapoora a great breadth of cultivated land has been laid under water by the bursting of the Kyouk tsay at Shoay Zayoung, and the over-flowing of the banks of Zongy and Panlang. Today the sky is clear, and it is to be hoped we are done with the rains for this season.

Timber promises to be sent down this year in much larger quantities than last: already more than 4000 logs have arrived from the Chendween and Moo rivers. Mr. Owen, the principal purchaser, is under contract to supply the railroad companies at Madras and Calcutta with large quantities. Besides which, he tells me that Captain Wheeler of Thayetmyo had also engaged him to bring down some 70,000 Rs. worth. No timber has yet arrived from above Amarapoora, but in the course of 10 or 15 days it will be coming in too. There is no lack of purchasers at the old prices. I do not think that less than 12 or 1500 logs will leave this season—the King says more, but he is inclined to exaggerate.

D'Orgoni has not been once at the Palace since you left, and there has been no more talk about his intended Embassy to

France, your communication to the Woongyee having cooled them down in that matter. That he may leave this town is very probable, but it will not be, unless I am greatly mistaken, as Envoy to the Court of France.

The King is a little cast down at present by the sickness of one of the Alae nandau's¹ children; it is not expected to live. I continue to see him daily, and believe he is of the same mind in every thing as he was when you were here. Since you left, I have been twice to the Prince's house. He sent for me, as he wishes to get a steam engine from Calcutta for the purpose of raising water; so I have written round for an estimate of the cost. The Be Moo Maen tha is still here, but will not be long, I think, in leaving for the Shan Country. Some of his people came in the other day and brought a quantity of crystals procured in the mountains near Monae. I send you one, the only one I could get.

Do you still want me to send your letters under cover to Captain Ardagh? This I will send direct to Rangoon under cover to Mr. Edwards. Kindly let me hear about the grain at your earliest convenience.

Mr. Camaretta and Father Abbona desire to be remembered to you. All your Burman friends are well. And trusting you have had a pleasant passage to Rangoon,

I remain, yours sincerely,
THOMAS SPEARS.

The Alae Nandaw's child died at 1 P.M. to day, and was buried in the evening in the Palace gardens. She was 9 months old.

¹ Queen of the Middle Palace, inferior to the chief Queen. Later on, at the death of Mindon, she played an important part in securing the accession of Thibaw.

246

Rangoon, Decr. 6th, 1855.

My Lord,

I beg to enclose copy of the letter dated the 12th Nov. last from Mr. Spears, which was omitted to be enclosed with my letter of this morning. I am, My Lord,

with much respect your obedient servant,

A. P. PHAYRE.

247

Amarapoorra, 12th Novr. 1855.

My dear Major Phayre,

I had last the pleasure of writing you by the King's boat on the 2nd. It rained all that day but the weather has since been beautifully clear. Three days ago the dak came in by which I heard of your safe arrival at Thayetmyo.

Signor Recanati has been here four days; he has not seen the King yet, but I suppose will soon, his Majesty having promised to give him an audience in a day or two. He has been rather unfortunate in the time of his arrival, as it is the yearly custom to make offerings to 'Nats' this month—the ceremony lasts fifteen days of which five have only yet run. Although the King will certainly give him something, I am much afraid he will be disappointed in his expectations.

On making inquiries as to where the best copper ore is found in the Shan States, I have had the names of many places given me; but they are of little use, as I have not been able to ascertain the distances. The sample of copper ore I now send is found at a town in the Shan States about 70 miles south east of Amarapoorra. The mine is reported to be rich, and the King is going to work it, if he finds he can do so profitably.

His Majesty, not being satisfied with the out-turn of the ruby mines lately, has determined upon trying another plan by which he expects a considerable increase of revenue. The Tso tha gyees, that is, the head men who have got charge of the villages at the mines, have been all sent for, and will remain in Amarapoorra, whilst other parties in the confidence of the King have been sent there with a good supply of money and men to examine all the likely places. They have now been away about twenty days so that we will soon hear with what success.

D'Orgoni is still here, but evidently making preparations for leaving; it is possible he may take some Burmese with him, but of this I am not certain. The King has never mentioned his name in my presence since you left. You will remember I told you, when here, that a deserter from the Fusiliers at Toungoo was in confinement for having committed disturbances in the street when drunk. Father Abbona the other day petitioned for

his release. The King told him that he might have him, but that he must take him to the Church and be responsible for his future conduct. This not suiting the Father he declined having anything more to do in the matter. He was then offered to me on the same terms, but, of course, I would have nothing to do with him. So he remains where he was.

Mr. Makertich's situation of Ku la Woon has been taken from him and given to a son-in-law of the Maguay Woongyee, Maker-tich now being only Maloon Woon.

We have nothing new here, everything going on as before; and notwithstanding rice being at a high rate not a single robbery takes place. The King still *speaks* of sending Camaretta and myself on a visit to Rangoon as soon as the little steamer is repaired.

I now return a packet that came up to your address by the last dak boat, and remain,

yours sincerely,
THOMAS SPEARS.

248

Amarapoora, 23d Novr. 1855.

My dear Major Phayre,

Since writing you ten days ago we have had no arrivals from Rangoon, although the dak is now six days overdue. When it does come in, I hope we will have some stirring news, the taking of Sebastopol at least. Nothing less can save me from giving a dinner to the Woongyees and other great men here, as the fifty days, on which my bet depends, are now nearly run.

D'Orgoni was at the Palace a few days ago and saw the King, who has promised to send him to France; but whether as a private individual or envoy, I have not been able to learn, but think it may be a little of both. The only thing I have yet seen, that he is going to take with him, is a sword set with small rubies neither very splendid or valuable. What other presents he may take with him is not known. And although it is said a few Burmese will accompany him, it is not yet certain who they may be; but I do not think they will be people of any rank. Under any circumstances I give the General a month to prepare for leaving this.

The produce of the Yae nan gyounng wells has been added to the King's other monopolies, and people purchasing earth oil there will now have to pay five rupees a hundred viss in place of $2\frac{1}{2}$, the highest price charged since the conclusion of the war.

Signor Recanati saw the King eight days ago, and was then promised he would be allowed to perform at the Palace, as soon as the religious feast was finished. To day being full moon is the last day, so that I do not suppose he will have much longer to wait. By the command of His Majesty all prisoners, without reference to the crimes they may have committed, will be set free this day, the deserter from the Fusiliers amongst the rest.

Since you left, there has been no more talk about coal mines, but they appear to be very sanguine about getting a good supply of sulphur from the mines of this article discovered in the Shan States. The Magway Woongyee tells me that it will not stand in more than 50 rupees a hundred viss delivered at the capital. Of the truth of this we will be better able to judge by and by.

The 1000 muskets purchased by Mr. M. David at Penang, and allowed to be imported by you, arrived a few days ago.

Paddy is 75 ticals a hundred baskets, but it is expected to be a little more than half that price, when the harvest becomes general a month and a half hence.

The sowings of the gram and wheat has commenced, and should the season be favourable, those crops may be expected to turn out considerably more this year than last. I trust soon to hear from you what the Commissariat say regarding these articles of produce.

Everything is as quiet here as could be wished, but as before all news from the Crimea is eagerly listened to.

Excuse this very uninteresting letter and I remain,

yours sincerely,
THOMAS SPEARS.

Memo.

Rangoon the 5th Decr. 1855.

After Tharawaddee usurped the throne of Burmah in 1839, he shewed himself so inimical to the American Missionaries, that they were obliged to leave the country.

When I was Commissioner of Arakan in 1850, the Reverend Mr. Ingalls asked me whether I supposed our Government would object to the United States Government entering into a commercial treaty with the Court of Ava. I replied that I believed our Government would not object. I remember writing this to Mr. John Colvin, now the Lieut. Governor of the N.W. Provinces. Mr. Ingalls after this went to America.

The following year there arrived from America the Revd. Mr. Kincaid, who had been at Ava at the time Col. Burney was, and was, I believe, the person who had made himself most disliked by the Tharawaddee faction by distributing religious tracts in the capital, which were considered offensive to religious Boodhists. This gentleman and his brother-in-law, Dr. Dawson, were at Rangoon when the 'Fox' first arrived there, and were, I believe, of great use to Commodore Lambert. They had only returned from America the previous year, having been there for not less than ten years, having apparently given up the mission to Burmah.

I heard nothing more of any intention on the part of the United States Government of forming a commercial treaty with Burmah until the autumn of 1853. I then met in Rangoon Dr. Peck, who had been deputed on the part of the American Baptist Mission Society to enquire into the state of their missions. He asked me regarding the probability of their missionaries being allowed to reside at Ava, and regarding their safety should they do so. He likewise informed me that, as secretary to the Baptist Board of Missions, he had had an interview with the Secretary of State, the late Mr. Daniel Webster, regarding the expulsion of their missionaries from the country, and that it had been the intention of the United States Government to have endeavoured to negotiate a commercial treaty with the King of Burmah, and to provide therein for the residence of missionaries in the country. I did not inquire particulars as to how it was proposed to carry out this intention, but I understood from Dr. Peck that the British occupation of Rangoon alone prevented the plan being attempted.

A. P. PHAYRE, Comr. of Pegu.

249

Rangoon, Decr. 20, 1855.

My Lord,

I beg to acknowledge the receipt of your Lordship's letter of the 26th Novr. last, enclosing a check for Rs. 750, which I have disposed of as intended.

On behalf of the Protestant inhabitants of the town of Rangoon I beg to return grateful thanks for your Lordship's subscription to the building of a church.

The Burmese are extremely grateful for the donation towards the expense of gilding the Shwe Dagon, and I took care to explain to them your Lordship's motives in making the donation.

I am sorry to say there has been a very destructive fire in Rangoon, yet not causing so extensive a loss as has been represented. I consider the loss in goods, &c. may reach five to six lacs of rupees, which is very considerable. Our local paper would make it out 15 lacs, but this I have no doubt is an exaggeration.

I beg to enclose copy of a letter from Mr. Spears dated the 3rd inst., which has an amusing story about D'Orgoni and his assumed name. I think it very probable there is some truth in the story, and it will probably shake the confidence of the Burmese in him.

I have not sent up by this steamer the model building, because I am waiting for one to arrive from Prome, which will probably be handsomer than the one made here. I hope the chests gave satisfaction. I am, My Lord,

with much respect your obedient servant,

A. P. PHAYRE.

250

Amarapoora, 3d Decr. 1855.

My dear Major Phayre,

I have got to thank you for your letter of the 1st ultimo received by dak on the 27th.

Your letter to the King was considered to be quite correct, and His Majesty was very well pleased with it. Those for the Woongyee and Woondouk have also been delivered. The Woondouk has promised me to have the list of the different artificial lakes

used for irrigation prepared in time to be sent by this dak; but you know the procrastinating character of the people here, so that it is very likely I may not receive it in time. However, by the next boat I think it is certain to go.

What information I can [? I will] procure about minerals and the Bhamo customs. The Shan daus¹ left some time ago, and the boxes and silver fish, I have little doubt, will be ready in the course of eight or ten days.

By last dak boat I had letters from Captain Ardagh enclosing a 'Hurkaru' extra announcing the fall of Sebastapol, Calcutta date 23d October. He received it overland by the Arakan route, so that in the matter of the bet I am all right.

Recanati has not as yet performed at the Palace, but will most likely do so in a day or two. Two days ago His Majesty asked me what I thought he should give him. I mentioned 2000 Rupees as the smallest sum he could well give, as Recanati had been put to considerable expense in coming up here. I hope this has not frightened him.

That persevering man the General is still here, and as far as I can see nothing yet has been done about his Embassy to France. It is said by many people that letters have been sent to Calcutta to try and find out who he really is. The other day Signor Recanati told me that he had found out through his wife something about the General. That the name he assumes 'D'Orgoni' is an anagram, the real name being Gi rodon, formerly a sugar planter in Burbong [? Bourbon] where he resided for fourteen years, but getting into difficulties on account of some law suits had obliged [him] to leave. You know that every man there must enter the Militia, so that perhaps after all he may be entitled to *some* military rank. I trust the above story is not one of the Signor's tricks, and that he has not been giving me what is vulgarly called a sell.

I have informed His Majesty what you say regarding grain, that nothing has yet been settled about the Commissariat taking it. I do not think that Prome or Thayetmyo could be supplied from Calcutta at a cheaper rate than is now asked.

We are now fairly in the cold season, the river low and presenting a very different appearance to what it did, when you were here. Woollens are comfortable wear for evening and morning.

Up to this date about 3000 logs of timber have left for Rangoon—all from the Chendween and *Moo* rivers. They are nearly all short lengths of 12 cubits. The timber from above this is not expected in for some days.

Father Abbona and Mr. Camaretta with his family desire to be remembered to you, and I remain,

Yours sincerely,

THOMAS SPEARS.

¹ i.e. dahs (knives).

251

Private. Government House, January 22nd, 1856.

My dear Phayre,

I have to thank you for your letter of 20th ultimo and 4th instant with an enclosure from Mr. Spears. It is very probable that D'Orgoni's name may have undergone the transformations supposed. There is a Mr. Owen here, a commercial agent on the part of the King of Ava, for whom Jardine Skinner & Co. vouch. He asks to see me about a steamer for the King. I shall see him; but I can't receive verbal messages from the King on such matters through such persons as Mr. Owen.

I am much obliged for the chests etc. The model Pagoda proved tremendously heavy. It took 60 Bengallees to lift the pedestal alone! I am sorry to say I have heard nothing definite from home regarding the honors, which I solicited for different officers.¹ The mail is now in the river and, I hope, may bring me something on that subject.

Always yours sincerely,

DALHOUSIE.

¹ Dalhousie's recommendation of the C.B. for Phayre among others was on this occasion rejected by the home authorities. Phayre's failure to negotiate a treaty with Mindon Min was the astounding reason given for the rejection of his claims. Dalhousie continued to press for the award after his return to England in May 1856. and eventually was successful.

252

Rangoon, Jany. 4th, 1856.

My Lord,

I beg to enclose copy of a letter from Mr. Spears dated the 13th of December. I have received the draft of your Lordship's letter to the King of Ava announcing the fall of Sebastopol, which has been translated and will be forwarded by the first opportunity.

I remember your Lordship mentioning that the Accountt. had entered the Revenues of Pegu for 1854/55 at 23 lacs, which I then supposed included the price of land sold in Rangoon. I find, however, that this is not the case, and that including every item the amt. is really 23 lacs, being much more than I anticipated.

There will be a goodly increase this year. A great number of vessels are expected from Europe to load with rice, and it is probable we shall not be able to sell so much as heretofore to our Ava friends.

I had referred to the Commissariat officer at Thayet Myo to know if he required any wheat and gram this year. He has referred to the Commissary General, and probably they will agree to take it at the former rates. The King evidently now sees the advantage of dealing thus and receiving his money in a lump, instead of depending on the market.

I have no particular news to give your Lordship, so subscribe myself,

with much respect your obedient servant,

A. P. PHAYRE.

253

Rangoon, Jany. 21st, 1856.

My Lord,

I beg to enclose copies of letters dated the 26th of Decr. 1855, and Jany. the 7th and 8th, from Mr. Spears. There does not appear to be any news of much interest. The Woongyee wishes to allow Mounng Bo to come down to his district. I am writing to say no—decidedly not. The people are just coming back across the border—and, of course, he wants to go down to stop this return of the population.

Some days ago there arrived here a letter for D'Orgoni under cover to his agent, and with it was a letter directed as noted on

the enclosed slip of paper. It had three seals with the letters shown thereon. No doubt D'Orgoni has engaged someone in Paris to write this letter.

A few days ago I was surprised to receive from Major Fytche a letter saying that he had discovered a place some fifteen miles above Dalhousie, which he thought might do better for the site of a city than that place. I certainly am surprised this was not known before. However, I purpose going there in a few days with Dr. Forsyth and Major Glasfurd; and if, as I hope, I may be allowed to come up to Calcutta before your Lordship leaves, I shall be able to give a definite report on the subject.

I am daily expecting to hear that the line of wires between this and Meeaday is complete, and was in hopes I might announce the arrival of the first message from that fort here, when to my dismay Mr. Wickham reports that one of the cables across the river has been broken. This will cause some delay in the transmission, of course, but except that break the line will be open this month.

The Toungoo line is now going on. I am sorry that the Prome and Rangoon road cannot be proceeded with, as it will be a great benefit to the country. The road to connect the frontier police posts is now being commenced.

Major Allan has gone to Maulmain to inspect the Martaban frontier.

I have by this mail reported having applied for the services of Ensign Lindsay of the 30th Regt. M.N.I. to fill one of the vacancies. I trust your Lordship will approve of this. I am, My Lord,

with much respect your obedient servant,

A. P. PHAYRE.

Direction of letter,

A Son Excellence

Le President des Ministres de
l'Empire Birman Asie.

Ava.

Seal



254

Amarápoora, 26 December, 1855.

My dear Major Phayre,

I am afraid you will find the enclosed statement of the Bomaw (Bhamo) Customs rather lame, but it is the best I can give you at present. The importation of Hastal [*sic* ? hartal], sulphate of arsenic, entirely depends upon the demand. Last year the price here being good, not less than 400,000 viss was brought in. This year from the absence of all demand, no one offering 30 *Rupees* a hundred Viss for the article, I do not think that a single Viss will be imported. It requires 35 Ticals a hundred Viss to pay the merchant. The importation of copper is more steady seldom falling below 30,000 Viss, or exceeding 50,000. The difference in value between the goods imported and cotton exported to China is made up in gold and silver from the latter place.

The King still continues to keep his apartments, but is reported to be much better. Although the fever has left him, he is still suffering from a severe cough, but there is not the least danger.

Our harvest is now beginning to be general, and as upon the whole it may be considered to be more than an average crop, prices have gone down: paddy to 38 Ticals a hundred baskets, and cleaned rice 130. The King is going this year to take five baskets paddy for every bae of land under cultivation watered by the rivers Zogy and Panlang, for the purpose of repairing the Dams carried away by the heavy rains; and as 60,000 bae are said to be under rice crop the Royal Granaries will be well stocked.

Lead still continues to come in from the Shan States in large quantities, and is shipped off for Rangoon as it comes to hand. Of this article not less than from 600,000 to 700,000 Viss will come in this cold season.

D'Orgoni the same as before, nothing being fixed about the time of his departure. His Secretary has quarrelled with him and gone to live with Mr. Reconati.

Everything is quiet here without a word of news.

What would be the punishment a European deserter would receive supposing he gave himself up?

And wish you a Merry Christmas and many happy returns of the season, I remain,

Yours sincerely,

(Sd.) THOMAS SPEARS.

I had almost forgot to mention that the Maguy Woongyee is going to send by this Dawk boat a lot of Baloo or Paloo bones received from the You District some ten days ago, [which] for some reason or another were not allowed to be landed here, and are still on board of the boat. Tomorrow morning I will go and see them transhipped. T.S.

Although there is a Custom House Establishment at Bomaw, duties are only levied there on those goods coming from China, that are intended for sale on [*sic* ? in] the Towns on the river side situated between that place and the capital. Merchandize for Amarapoora is inspected at Bomaw, when a pass is granted stating the quantity and description of goods, the duty on which is paid here on arrival, either in cash or kind, as may suit the convenience of the Collector. 10 per cent. is taken, eight of which only go to the Royal Treasury, the remaining two per cent. being absorbed in paying the salaries of the Collector of Customs and his people.

On exportations to China no duties are taken, but still there are charges made at the different stations between this and China, that may amount to $2\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. From all I can learn, I do not think that more than $1\frac{1}{2}$ lac ticals is derived yearly from the Bomaw Customs.

As follows.

Imports average last two years.

			Ywetnee
40,000 bundles silk @ 25 per bundle	10,00,000 @ 10 per cent.		1,00,000
40,000 Viss copper @ 120 per Hd.	48,000 @ 10 " "		4,800
1,20,000 " Hustal @ 38 " "	45,600 @ 10 " "		4,560
The value of all other imports say	2,00,000 @ 10 " "		20,000
	<hr/>		<hr/>
	12,93,600		1,29,360

This is the most I can make of it; and although it may come to more some years, upon the average I think it will be found to be pretty correct. T. S.

Amarapoora, 23 Dec. 1855.

255

Amarapoora, 7th January 1856.

My dear Major Phayre,

I had the pleasure of receiving your letter of the 8th ultimo by the King's boat on the 4th instant.

The King is now, I am happy to say, nearly well. I saw him yesterday, and although looking somewhat thinner than usual, he was in excellent spirits. He says he will see Mr. Recanati's performance in the early part of this *latzan*.

D'Orgoni is not well; dysentery is his disease, brought on, I think, by fretting himself and drinking bad wine. In the projected Mission to France he does not appear to have made further progress, and if I can manage it, I will do my best to persuade the King to give over the ridiculous scheme altogether.

His Majesty wants change of air, and so is going to have a palace built on the river side between this and Ava, near the Shoay gyet yet pagoda. He purposes going out to examine the site in a few days more.

Orders have been given to commence fifty new granaries for the King's paddy; but they will not be able to finish them all for a year or two. Ten long row boats, intended to carry a gun in the bows, are at present building on the banks of the river, some being nearly finished; the models are bad, and the workmanship, if anything, worse. It is a pity to see good timber wasted in the way it is done here.

There is nothing, absolutely nothing, to write about by this dak, so wishing you a Happy New Year,

I remain, Yours sincerely,

THOMAS SPEARS.

256

Amarapoora, 8 January, 1856.

My dear Major Phayre,

Just as the boat was starting I was sent for by the Magway Woongyee, and requested by him to write you concerning the Meaday Woon, Mounng Bo. The Woongyee says he wishes to send him down to his old place for the purpose of bringing up his goods and family, but does not like to do so until he gets

your permission, as he had promised, when you were here, to retain that man a year at the capital. I believe MOUNG BO's reason for wishing to get down at present is, that he has no one whom he can trust with bringing his *property* up. His wife, he says, is certainly there; but then she is only a woman.

In the event of your agreeing to the above, the WOONGYEE promises that he will not be absent from this for more than three months, and that he will bring him back with him on his return from the *Shoay zet daw Pya*,¹ to which place he proceeds for the purpose of seeing it repaired in the course of a month and a half.

Yours sincerely,

THOMAS SPEARS.

¹ i.e. paya = a pagoda.

257

Rangoon, Feby. 6th, 1856.

My Lord,

I have received your Lordship's letter dated the 22d of January. I have no particular news to send, but as the time for your Lordship's departure draws near, I hope I may be allowed to come up to Calcutta and see your Lordship before your departure.

I beg to enclose copy of a letter from Mr. Spears dated the 17th of Jany. There is nothing very particular therein.

My letter to the Woongyee was a private communication, telling him I was preparing a map for him.

I have not yet heard of the arrival of your Lordship's letter to the King, but expect to hear in a few days more.

The man in Rangoon, who the King desires me to look after, named MOUNG BWA, is a bad character, and I shall look after him; but I fancy the King warns me against him chiefly out of spite to him than anything else.

The men of the King's dak boat were found smuggling, and have been duly punished.

The collections of duty at the Thayet Myo custom house have been 3½ lacs of rupees during 1855, which is far beyond what I expected for years to come.

I now fully expect that the year 1855/56—ending 30th April 1856—will give a total revenue for the province of 27 lacs.

I am sending up by this steamer to the address of Captain Bowie¹ a model building for your Lordship, termed a *Pya-thad* or spire. I am, My Lord,

with much respect, your obedient servant,

A. P. PHAYRE.

P.S. I have written by this mail regarding the discovery of a site, 15 miles above Dalhousie, which was said to offer advantages for a port. Major Fytche goes up by this steamer.

¹ Aide-de-camp to Lord Dalhousie and, after Major Ramsay's return to England through sickness, head of the Governor-General's household. He had attended Lady Dalhousie on her fatal journey to England in 1853.

258

Amarapoorra, 17 January, 1856.

My dear Major Phayre,

Yesterday I had the pleasure of receiving your letter of the 14th ultimo, the boat being somewhat overdue from having been detained by a mistake of river police at the boundary for a few days; but there is no harm done.

By Mr. Jordan, who arrived here three days ago, I have received a watch, presented to me by some of the gentlemen of the Mission, whose names you will know.¹ Should any of them be in Rangoon, you will do me the favor of expressing how very much I feel flattered by their kind gift; I can assure you I prize it much, and will keep it in remembrance of their visit to Amarapoorra. Mr. Camaretta has received the watch and two rings sent by you, and will answer your note by next dawk.

Your letter for the Woongyee has been duly delivered, and as he read it aloud, I had the benefit of hearing all that it contained. Some few days before he was speaking to me about the 'flat map of the world' you had promised him.

The King is well enough to come out at times, but has not quite recovered his usual health. Recanati exhibited the dissolving views at the Palace a week ago. His Majesty promised to come out, but did not feel well enough, when the time came,

to make his appearance. However, he sent his Queen with all his children. Last night he performed at the Prince's, and will do so again this evening. I trust he will be able to leave this in a few days.

The King is still speaking about sending Camaretta and myself to Rangoon, but I have advised him to wait until you return from Calcutta. Camaretta will have charge of money of the King's for the purpose of purchasing some things in Calcutta for His Majesty's use. Should you have any particular objection to my coming, let me know, and I will put it off.²

A few days ago the 'General' got another thousand rupees from the King; but, although the presents for France are all ready, the time of leaving has been put off indefinitely.

The Dawk boat people have been misbehaving themselves, as you will see by the copies of the two letters I now enclose you. Everything quiet here, and I remain,

Yours sincerely,

THOMAS SPEARS.

P.S. When at the Palace this morning I saw the King, who requested me to write you and say that there is at present a very bad man in Rangoon, (whose family is here) by name Mong Bwa, about 35 years old. This man some six years ago attempted to get up a rebellion at Tsagine. He has been writing to the King lately, and the tenor of his letters, leading H.M. to suppose that he may perhaps be wishing to try something of the same kind with you, is the reason of his putting you on your guard.

Mr. Camaretta has received the box of medical stores, and begs you thank Dr. Forsyth in his name for them.

THOMAS SPEARS.

18th January, 1856.

¹ A gold watch with the initials of the donors engraved on the inside of the lid. The inscription runs thus:

To		
Thomas Spears Esquire		
from		
his friends in the Ava Mission		
J. F.		A. M. M.
T. O.	J. R.	C. G.
G. A.		J. H. H.
H. Y.	1855	R. S. E.

The initials stand for John Forsyth, Thomas Oldham, Grant Allan, Henry Yule, A. M. Mackenzie (Lieut. in the bodyguard), Colesworthy Grant (the artist), J. H. Hardy (Lieut. in the bodyguard), R. S. Edwards, and John Rennie. The watch is now in the possession of R. A. P. Spears, Esq. of Rangoon, a great-grandson of Thomas Spears.

² They travelled up to Calcutta in the autumn of 1856. In Rangoon Secretariat File No. 18 of 1856 there is a draft of a letter to the Government of India in Phayre's handwriting dated 2 October 1856, introducing Spears and Camaretta 'a Goa Portuguese who is much in the confidence of the King', and intimating that they are proceeding to Calcutta to make purchases for the King of Ava. (*Vide Indian Hist. Recs. Commission, Proceedings*, vol x, p. 192.)

259

To Thomas Spears Esq., Amarapoora.

Sir,

I have the honor to inform you that it being strongly suspected your dawk boats are in the habit of smuggling goods, orders were given to examine the last one, which arrived at Meeaday on the 29th ulto. The men were most unwilling to undergo this ordeal, and strongly denied having anything on board. It turned out, however, that they had stowed away silk piece goods, &c., valued at about Rs. 1700 (Rupees seventeen hundred), which are accordingly confiscated. I allowed the boat to pass on, on account of the inconvenience the seizure would occasion to innocent parties. But at the same time explained to the men, that should they make a 2nd attempt, boat and goods would be seized.

I have the honor to be, Sir,
Your most obedient servant,

Thayetmyo
1 Dec. 1855.

HENRY M. LOW.
Collector of Customs.

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To The Collector of Customs, Thayetmyo.

Sir,

I had the honor to receive your communication of the 1st ultimo on the 12th inst., the man, you entrusted it with, having been detained on the road. I congratulate you on your prize.

What you say really surprises me, as I had never suspected the dawk-boat people of smuggling. On making a reference to Mr. Camaratta, the Collector of Customs here, I find that the goods seized had also been smuggled from this, so that the rascals have not only been defrauding the British Government but their own Government also, and so richly deserve to lose their property. The boat being the King's, I think you have used a just discretion in letting it pass, as *he* is not to blame in this matter in any way.

It is only with the packet that I am entrusted; and, so long as that is carried safely, I have got nothing to say to the people, who are hired and paid by the Burmese Government.

I do not think that the goods seized are the property of any traders here, but that they belong entirely to the boat men, who will, I have no doubt, be well punished on their return for the part they have acted. The authorities here have been informed of all the particulars of this transaction, and

I have the honor to be, Sir,

Amarapoorra

Your most obedient servant,

13 Jan. 1856.

THOMAS SPEARS B.M.¹

¹ It is not clear what these letters stand for, possibly British Merchant.

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Government House, February 15th, 1856.

My dear Phayre,

Your letter of 6th instant has reached me, but you say nothing more of your coming up. I greatly fear that there has been some misapprehension: for I understand that you are waiting until I should write to you, while I, in the belief that you were on your way, have not written at all by the last Mail. If this misapprehension should have the effect of preventing my seeing you once again before I leave India, I shall very much regret it: for I should have rejoiced in your presence here, not only that I might see you myself, but that I might make you personally known to Lord Canning before my departure. It is vain to tell you to come now, for I shall be gone before you could obey the summons. I must therefore rest in hope that you will have resolved to come by the next steamer after all.

The Home authorities, I am sorry and angry to say, have not vouchsafed any reply as yet to the application, which I made to them, for honours to be bestowed on several officers before my departure. I will not say farewell by this mail.

Yours always sincerely,
DALHOUSIE.

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Government House, March 5th, 1856.

My dear Phayre,

I am greatly concerned to find that I am not to have the pleasure of seeing you here. The cross-purposes, at which we have been, were most unfortunate, and they have deprived me of the opportunity I much desired of presenting you to Lord Canning, as well as of the satisfaction of taking a final leave of you.

You have never sent the note of the cost of the several articles you have despatched from Rangoon to me. Pray write to Bowie, and he will pay you. Enclosed are two royal letters. Translate them for me, like a good fellow, mark them, and send them to England after me, addressed to Dalhousie Castle, Edinburgh. Is the seal with the Peacock on it, or the one with a Palace on it, the Great Seal of Ava? The former, I fancy.

And now I must take my leave of you. I do it with great regret. It is impossible to conceive any demi-official correspondence more agreeable than yours has been. You have performed your public duties with ability, with assiduity, and success; and I am grateful to you personally for exertions which have raised my own reputation, while they were of conspicuous value to the state.

Farewell. Write to me sometimes, and believe that I shall remain always,

faithfully and sincerely yours,
DALHOUSIE.

P.S. I have received no definite reply regarding the C.B. But I still hope for it. D.

APPENDIX I

BURMESE GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATION

IN view of the many references in these letters to the Court of Ava, its ministers and other functionaries, some discussion of Burmese governmental organization is called for, especially for the sake of readers unfamiliar with the subject. Those already familiar with it are advised to skip this note. Most modern text-books of Burmese history give brief descriptions of the old Court of Ava—notably Harvey and Cocks. Fuller treatment of the subject is to be found in Yule, *op. cit. supra*, Chapter XI, and Crawford, *op. cit. supra*, Chapter XV. Both Yule and Crawford wrote from first-hand acquaintance, and took great pains to verify the accuracy of their facts.

In the first place, offices in the central government were neither hereditary nor restricted to any particular class of people. Men of the lowest degree (except slaves) might be (and often were) given high appointments. There was, moreover, no nobility either hereditary or of the robe. In theory—and often in practice also—every Burman was the King's slave, disposable at any time in any way by the government. Yet this despotism was not as unlimited as either its theory or its occasional acts would suggest. In the localities custom, and at the Court precedent and, above all, etiquette, had enormous binding power. Custom and etiquette in Burma played the same part as public opinion in the West. Further, since no official from highest to lowest received a salary, the *douceur*, given discreetly and of sufficient magnitude, could mitigate even the worst evils. Nevertheless, bribery was expensive in Burma. The factors of the East India Company, who traded to Burma with so little success in the seventeenth century, attributed the comparatively greater success of the Dutch to their greater resources for bribery. Every official, no matter how high or how low, from the Wungyis of the Hlutdaw to the lowliest clerk or meanest boatman, expected his due perquisite. This system was one of the chief causes of the failure of the East India Company's experiment in building ships at Syriam in the first half of the eighteenth century. It was also not a little responsible for the outbreak of the Second Burmese War.

At the apex of the governmental pyramid, registering the edicts of the king, issuing royal orders and letters, and trying important cases, stood the Hlutdaw, or royal court, composed of the highest

officers of state, the Wungyis, and presided over by the Ein she min, or Heir Apparent. The Wungyis, usually numbering four, deliberated together upon every matter referred to them, and arrived at decisions by a majority of voices. They were not the heads of departments, but were all—save when sent on special deputation away from the capital—ministers without portfolio, unable in theory to conduct public business individually, except in certain types of private lawsuits, which each might decide at his own house. In the plan of a Burmese monarch's palace, the same traditional spot was always occupied by the Hludaw building; and wherever the King went, there also went the Hludaw, occupying even in temporary quarters exactly the same relative position to the royal apartments.

Nominally the decisions of the Hludaw constituted advice to the King, which he could accept or reject according as he wished. The decisions of the Hludaw and its other records were written down by Saye-daw-gyis (great royal writers), usually from eight to ten in number, attached to the court, and under the supervision of the Wundauks. These last were high officials attached to the Wungyis as their deputies or 'props', sitting in the Hludaw, but with no deliberative or voting powers. Communications between the King and the Hludaw were carried by Thandawzins ('receivers of the royal voice') or Nakhandaws ('royal ears'). But the Hludaw had the privilege under certain conditions of requesting the King's presence at its proceedings.

A throne was always in its hall for his use, and was connected with his apartments by a private door. A Wungyi was usually mentioned by the title 'Mingyi' (great prince) attached to the name of some district, from which he drew his revenues, or by the name of some office which he had formerly held. Thus the four Wungyis of the early part of Mindon's reign attached the names of the Burmese districts of Magwe, Myadaung, Minlaung, and Pagan respectively to their titles, but he of Myadaung was often designated the Pabèwun, through having formerly been head 'smith' to the government, or, as we may express it, 'master of the ordnance'. The Magwe Mingyi, usually regarded as the senior Wungyi, is known in the earlier part of this correspondence by his earlier title of Kyauk Maw Mingyi, which he held in Pagan Min's reign. He had been raised to the rank of Wungyi by King Tharawaddy. He acted almost as foreign minister to the Burmese Government, being in charge of all correspondence with the British. In speaking or writing to a Wungyi the Pali title 'Egga Maha Thinapadi' (Agga mahā senāpati) was always used.

Besides the Hludaw with its formal rules of procedure and high

public position there was in the Burmese government another body, the Byédaik, often called the Privy Council by English writers from the fact that its officials as officers of the royal household (Atwinwuns), came into closer contact with the King than the Wungyis, and hence became his private advisers. Its composition, procedure, and even its powers were similar to those of the Hlutdaw, with which it kept in touch by means of nakhandaws, whom Crawford calls 'authorized spies'. And thus while by prescriptive right and public recognition the Hlutdaw was the supreme council of the realm, the Atwinwuns and the Byédaik often exercised a more potent and decisive influence upon royal policy. The Byédaik possessed about thirty secretaries or Thandawzins, who assisted the Atwinwuns, wrote down the verbal orders of the king, and transacted a good deal of palace business. Yule mentions the Byédaik as carrying on extensive business in connexion with the system of royal monopolies built up by Mindon Min. Phayre in his letter of 3 April 1853 calls a Wundauk 'a minister of state of the second grade'. According to strict formality this was probably true, though in reality the Atwinwun exercised greater influence. Crawford, writing in 1829, said it was a disputed point at the Court of Ava which of the two ranks was the higher.

The Dalla Woon (Wun in modern spelling) derived his title from the fact of his having been Governor (Wun) of the province of Dalla, before its conquest by the British.

APPENDIX II

LORD DALHOUSIE'S SECOND VISIT TO BURMA

THE gap between Letter No. 76 and Letter No. 77 is accounted for by Lord Dalhousie's second visit to Burma. His biographer, Sir William Lee-Warner, has given an interesting account of this, to which the reader is referred (*op. cit.* ii, pp. 18-22). He left Calcutta on the 9th of December 1853, returning on the 17th of January following. Into the intervening space of time he crammed a surprising amount of activity, a detailed account of which he afterwards sent to the Court of Directors in a very long minute dated the 14th of February 1854 (*I.S.P.*, Cons. 24 Feb. 1854, No. 34). In it he stated that after leaving Calcutta on board the *Zenobia* he had proceeded first to Akyab, where he had inquired into the progress of road construction between Akyab and Chittagong. Thence he had sailed to the point on the Arakan coast where the road from the Taungup Pass would descend to the sea. There, between the Islands of Ramree

and Cheduba, he had found an admirable roadstead, free from dangers, perfectly sheltered and with full facilities for a steamer to be stationed for speedy conveyance of news, if the Burmese should renew hostilities, or for landing troops for service in Pegu. On examination it had been found that creek navigation between that point and Akyab was satisfactory. So measures had been taken for laying out halting stations. This, he hoped, would make it possible to send troops by the land route from Bengal to Pegu, when the next relief period came round. Next he had examined the Alguada reef to see whether the building of a lighthouse there were practicable. It was, he thought, possible to put an iron one there, but he had ordered a more complete examination to be made during the ensuing monsoon. Without a light this dangerous reef caused the loss of at least half a day to mail packets between Rangoon and Calcutta.

At Rangoon, after inquiry into the recent conspiracy he had taken measures, he said, to prevent the possibility of the recurrence of such a project. These consisted in 'the separation and fortification of one portion of the upper Platform [i.e. of the Shwe Dagon Pagoda] to be held by a guard, and in the delivery under certain rules of the care of the Great Pagoda itself to the servants of the Pagoda, who formerly were charged with it'. Other matters dealt with at Rangoon included the fixing of the site of the permanent cantonment, the determination of the position of the European Barracks, arrangements for the disposal of gunpowder and other ordnance stores, and the provision of better quarters for the Commissariat Establishment.

Thence he had gone to Prome and Myede, on the way inspecting several different sites for cantonments. Two of these were chosen: one at Thayetmyo for the main frontier force, the other just below Prome for the rest. In order to allay all suspicions that the British might evacuate Pegu, he had proceeded up to the extreme frontier beyond Myede where Major Allan had erected masonry pillars on both sides of the river, and in the presence of the steamers and troops had hoisted the British colours upon the pillars and saluted them.

In consultation with Brigadier-General Sir John Cheape he had sanctioned the construction of roomier barracks for European troops and of specially designed huts for sepoys. The difficulty of procuring timber for these purposes owing to extensive 'poaching' in Prome and Tharawaddy districts had led him to lay down rules for stopping this evil. He had taken special care that in laying out all cantonments adequate space should be reserved for a public garden both as an agreeable resort and also for the provision of fresh vegetables for the troops. 'Pulling boats' also he had had ordered for the amusement

and exercise of the troops. Further, he had sanctioned the recommendation of the Superintending Surgeon and Medical Officers that a medical depot for the sick should be established at Rangoon on account of the 'proved salubrity of the climate'. Thus men would be sent down the river periodically to Rangoon for change of air.

Regarding public works he announced that Major Allan was about to examine the country between Myede and Toungoo with a view to linking up those two places by a military road. The road from Prome to the Taungup Pass had been actively begun; that from Prome to Rangoon was being surveyed, as also a projected road from Pegu to Toungoo. The tidal creek of the Sitang was being surveyed in the hope that a channel might be found open to navigation between Toungoo and Rangoon. In the same way attempts were being made to discover a channel between the Irrawaddy and Bassein Rivers open all the year round. These matters had kept the P.W.D. officers so busy that the electric telegraph had not yet been set up, but he hoped that during the course of the coming year Rangoon, Myede, and Toungoo would be linked up by wire.

Great progress had been made in introducing order into the country, he assured the Directors. The operations of the dacoit leaders Maung Gaung Gyi, Mya Tun, and others had been grossly exaggerated in the press. Mya Tun had never re-entered the province after his flight from Danubyu. Gaung Gyi, who had been merely a petty local officer corresponding to a Tasildhar in India, had been driven in headlong flight and almost captured, while he (Lord Dalhousie) was at Prome. It was not to be expected that 'this wild province' and Tharawaddy, 'turbulent even under Burmese authority', would settle down at once. But such acts of violence as had recently disturbed the peace would soon, he thought, be entirely suppressed. As evidence of the success of the various measures for preserving the peace Dalhousie was able proudly to point to the fact that he had gone from Rangoon to the extreme frontier and back unaccompanied by a single soldier by way of escort. A measure about to be introduced throughout the country, and one upon which he placed great hopes, was the establishment of a village police 'founded upon the former institution of the people themselves'.

So far as the political condition of the province was concerned Lord Dalhousie was able to confirm the accuracy of his previous representations to the Court of Directors on the subject of the peaceable intentions of the Burmese Government. The fact that the King had recently returned to Amarapoora showed his peaceful intentions. In fact so far from meditating an attack were the Burmese that they were in alarmed expectation of a British advance. With the appoint-

ment of Mr. Spears as British Correspondent at Ava a substantial improvement in mutual relations might confidently be anticipated.

On the prospects of the new province he could write with unconcealed enthusiasm: 'My visit was too hasty and too limited in its scope to admit of my giving at present any trustworthy opinion on the resources and probable productiveness of the country. This, however, was manifest at first sight, wherever we went, that the soil was naturally fertile in the extreme, and that population is only needed to draw from the alluvial plains the same products which have long enriched Bengal, while the abundant timber, and the noble rivers, which divide the plains and everywhere penetrate them by their dependent creeks, give rare facilities for turning the natural productiveness of the country to the best account.'

He then concluded his exhaustive survey with the hope that the Honourable Court would find this 'faithful and unvarnished sketch of the state of Pegu as it certainly seems to me to be satisfactory for the present and hopeful for the future'. He did not mention in this minute what, from the point of view of later residents in Rangoon, might be considered one of the most valuable results of his visit. Attracted by the beauty of the Royal Lakes, and with his imagination keenly alert to their possibilities in the development of the Rangoon of the future, Lord Dalhousie before his departure directed Phayre to reserve the lakes and the forest land round them as public property. Thus the first steps were taken in the creation of Dalhousie Park, Rangoon's choicest amenity.

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